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## HERBAL LIFE



### Legal marijuana industry toasts banner year

In this Sept. 11, 2018, file photo Steve Fagan, grower and collective owner of SLOgrown Genetics, attends to his organically cultivated cannabis at his farm in the coastal mountain range of San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Associated Press  
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### Light up Aruba Firework Show

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# Storm whips up blizzards, dumps snow in Dakotas, Minnesota

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)** — Post-holiday travelers were finding driving difficult as a winter storm dumped heavy snow and whipped up gusty winds across parts of the Dakotas and Minnesota on Thursday.

Up to 11 inches (28 centimeters) of snow had fallen in the Moorhead-Alexandria area of western Minnesota by mid-afternoon Thursday, and it was still snowing, said meteorologist Tyler Hasenstein of the Twin Cities National Weather Service.

The line of snow ended just northwest of the Twin Cities around Elk River, Hasenstein said. The snowfall peaked around 3 inches (8 centimeters) at the Minneapolis airport, then rain starting early Thursday melted the



**Errol Behm uses a scarf to shield his face from the blow-back of snow caused by the gusty winds as he clears a sidewalk with a snow blower near Fourth Street Thursday, Dec. 27, 2018, in Bismarck, N.D.**

**Associated Press**

snowpack.

Officials in North Dakota is-

sued a no-travel advisory for the eastern part of the state due to icy roads and reduced visibility. Blustery winds were causing blizzard conditions in Jamestown, North Dakota, and in northern South Dakota, where transportation officials reported visibility was down to a quarter-mile along a stretch of Highway 10.

Bus service for Fargo, North Dakota, and neighboring Moorhead, Minnesota, was suspended Thursday afternoon because of worsening road conditions. Service is expected to resume Friday with a normal schedule.

The National Weather Service issued blizzard warnings for central South Dakota, eastern North Dakota and western Minnesota. The storm was expected to drop more than a foot of snow in the region before ending Friday.

The Minnesota State Patrol tweeted that road conditions are poor across much of western Minnesota. Transportation officials said road conditions across

much of the central and northern areas of the state are completely covered with ice and snow, with windy conditions causing even more travel issues. The Minnesota Department of Transportation said it might be better to wait for conditions to improve if travel isn't necessary.

The weather service said an estimated 18 inches of snow had fallen by early Thursday afternoon near Finland on Minnesota's North Shore.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol issued a travel alert for parts of North Dakota including Bismarck and Devils Lake due to whiteout conditions.

Eastern North Dakota was expected to deal with winds gusting up to 50 mph, creating blizzard conditions mainly in the Red River Valley.

University campuses, courthouses and municipal buildings across North Dakota are among the places closed on Thursday, including the University of North Dakota campus in Grand Forks. □

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# Legal marijuana industry toasts banner year

From Front

By GILLIAN FLACCUS  
Associated Press

**PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)** — The last year was a 12-month champagne toast for the legal marijuana industry as the global market exploded and cannabis pushed its way further into the financial and cultural mainstream.

Liberal California became the largest legal U.S. marketplace, conservative Utah and Oklahoma embraced medical marijuana, and the U.S. East Coast got its first commercial pot shops. Canada ushered in broad legalization, and Mexico's Supreme Court set the stage for that country to follow.

U.S. drug regulators approved the first marijuana-based pharmaceutical to treat kids with a form of epilepsy, and billions of investment dollars poured into cannabis companies. Even main street brands like Coca-Cola said they are considering joining the party. "I have been working on this for decades, and this was the year that the movement crested," said U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, an Oregon Democrat working to overturn the federal ban on pot. "It's clear that this is all coming to a head."

With buzz building across the globe, the momentum will continue into 2019.

Luxembourg is poised to become the first European country to legalize recreational marijuana, and South Africa is moving in that direction. Israel's Parliament approved a law allowing exports of medical marijuana. Thailand legalized medicinal use of marijuana, and other Southeastern Asian countries may follow South Korea's lead in legalizing cannabidiol, or CBD. It's a non-psychoactive compound found in marijuana and hemp plants and used for treatment of certain medical problems.

"It's not just the U.S. now. It's spreading," said Ben Curren, CEO of Green Bits, a San Jose, California, company that develops

software for marijuana retailers and businesses.

Curren's firm is one of many that blossomed as the industry grew. He started the company in 2014 with two friends. Now, he has 85 employees, and the company's software processes \$2.5 billion in sales transactions a year for more than 1,000 U.S. retail stores and dispensaries.

Green Bits raised \$17 million in April, pulling in money from investment firms including Snoop Dogg's Casa Verde Capital. Curren hopes to expand internationally by 2020.

"A lot of the problem is keeping up with growth," he said.

Legal marijuana was a \$10.4 billion industry in the U.S. in 2018 with a quarter-million jobs devoted just to the handling of marijuana plants, said Beau Whitney, vice president and senior economist at New Frontier Data, a leading cannabis market research and data analysis firm. There are many other jobs that don't involve direct work with the plants, but they are harder to quantify, Whitney said. Investors poured \$10 billion into cannabis in North America in 2018, twice what was invested in the last three years combined, he said, and the combined North American market is expected to reach more than \$16 billion in 2019.

Increasingly, U.S. lawmakers see that success and want it for their states.

Nearly two-thirds of U.S. states now have legalized some form of medical marijuana.

Voters in November made Michigan the 10th state — and first in the Midwest — to legalize recreational marijuana. Governors in New York and New Jersey are pushing for a similar law in their states next year, and momentum for broad legalization is building in Pennsylvania and Illinois.

"Let's legalize the adult use of recreational marijuana once and for all," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said last week.

The East Coast's first recreational pot shops opened



In this July 12, 2018, file photo head grower Mark Vlahos, of Milford, Mass., tends to cannabis plants, at Sira Naturals medical marijuana cultivation facility, in Milford, Mass.

Associated Press

in November in Massachusetts.

State lawmakers in Nebraska just formed a campaign committee to put a medical cannabis initiative to voters in 2020. Ne-

braska shares a border with Colorado, one of the first two states to legalize recreational marijuana, and Iowa, which recently started a limited medical marijuana program.

"Attitudes have been rapidly evolving and changing. I know that my attitude toward it has also changed," said Nebraska state Sen. Adam Morfeld, a Democrat. "Seeing the medical benefits and seeing other states implement it ... has convinced me that it's not the dangerous drug it's made out to be."

With all its success, the U.S. marijuana industry continues to be undercut by a robust black market and federal law that treats marijuana as a controlled substance like heroin. Financial institutions are skittish about cannabis businesses, even in U.S. states where they are legal, and investors until recently have been reluctant to put their money behind pot. □

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## Government shutdown likely to stretch into next week

By **JULIET LINDERMAN** and **DARLENE SUPERVILLE**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Chances look slim for ending the partial government shutdown any time soon. House lawmakers are being told not to expect further votes this week, all but ensuring the shutdown will enter a second week and stretch toward the new year.

Lawmakers are away from Washington for the holidays and have been told they will get 24 hours' notice before having to return for a vote. And although both the House and the Senate were slated to come into session briefly Thursday afternoon, few senators or representatives were expected to be around for it.



**Tourists board a boat headed for the Statue of Liberty in New York, Thursday, Dec. 27, 2018.**

President Donald Trump is vowing to hold the line on his demand for money to build a border wall. Back from the 29-hour trip to visit U.S. troops, Trump tweeted Thursday that "we desper-

ately need" a wall on the Mexico border, funding for which has been a flashpoint between the White House and Congress ever since Trump took office. He called on Democrats in

Congress to fund his wall, saying the shutdown affects their supporters. He asserted without evidence: "Do the Dems realize that most of the people not getting paid are Democrats?" Virginia Democratic Sen. Mark Warner called Trump's comments "outrageous." In his tweet, he added: "Federal employees don't go to work wearing red or blue jerseys. They're public servants. And the President is treating them like poker chips at one of his failed casinos."

After a weekend and two holiday days for federal employees, Wednesday was the first regularly scheduled workday affected by the closure of a variety of federal services. A brief statement Thursday from the office of Louisiana Rep. Steve Scalise, the No. 3 Republican, spoke to the dim prospect for a quick solution. "Members are advised that no votes are expected in the House this week," the statement said. "Please stay tuned to future updates for more information."

The shutdown started Saturday when funding lapsed for nine Cabinet-level departments and dozens of agencies. Roughly 420,000 workers were deemed essential and are working unpaid, while an additional 380,000 have been furloughed.

While the White House was talking to congressional Democrats — and staff talks continued on Capitol Hill — negotiations dragged Wednesday, dimming hopes for a swift breakthrough.

Republican Rep. Mark Meadows of North Carolina, a Trump ally who has been involved in the talks, said the president "is very firm in his resolve that we

need to secure our border." He told CNN, "If they believe that this president is going to yield on this particular issue, they're misreading him."


The impasse over government funding began last week, when the Senate approved a bipartisan deal keeping government open into February. That bill provided \$1.3 billion for border security projects but not money for the wall. At Trump's urging, the House approved that package and inserted the \$5.7 billion he had requested.

Kevin Hassett, the chairman of the White House's Council of Economic Advisers, said the shutdown does not change the administration's expectation for strong growth heading into 2019. He told reporters a shutdown of a few weeks is not going to have any "significant effect on the outlook."

Among those affected by the shutdown — the third of 2018 — are the departments of Homeland Security, Transportation, Interior, Agriculture, State and Justice. Those being furloughed include 52,000 workers at the Internal Revenue Service and nearly everyone at NASA. About 8 in 10 employees of the National Park Service are staying home, and many parks have closed.

The shutdown didn't stop people from visiting the White Sands National Monument in southern New Mexico, where hundreds of unauthorized visitors have in recent days climbed over a fence to enter the monument, according to The Alamogordo Daily News. State highway workers were sent to the area Monday to erect "no parking" signs along U.S. 70 outside the monument. □

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ARUBATODAY**SAVE TIME  
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**Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The #MeToo movement is empowering victims of sexual assault to speak up like never before, but what should be a watershed moment for holding assailants accountable has coincided with a troubling trend: Police departments in the U.S. are becoming less and less likely to successfully close rape investigations.

The so-called “clearance rate” for rape cases fell last year to its lowest point since at least the 1960s, according to FBI data provided to The Associated Press. That nadir may be driven, at least in part, by a greater willingness by police to correctly classify rape cases and leave them open even when there is little hope of solving them.

But experts say it also reflects the fact that not enough resources are being devoted to investigating sexual assault at a time when more victims are entrusting police with their harrowing experiences.

“This is the second-most serious crime in the FBI’s crime index,” said Carol Tracy, executive director of the Women’s Law Project in Philadelphia, “and it simply doesn’t get the necessary resources from police.”

Police successfully closed just 32 percent of rape investigations nationwide in 2017, according to the data, ranking it second only to robbery as the least-solved violent crime. That statistic is down from about 62 percent in 1964, despite advances such as DNA testing.

The FBI provided The AP with a dataset of rape statistics dating back to the early 1960s — a table that

includes more complete data than the snapshot the bureau releases each fall.

The grim report card has prompted debate among



In this Dec. 18, 2018 photo, Sam Gaspardo poses for a portrait at the Associated Press bureau in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

criminal justice experts, with some attributing the falling clearance rate to an antiquated approach to investigations.

“You’d figure with all the new technology — and the fact that the overwhelming majority of victims of sexual assault know their attacker — the clearance rates would be a lot higher,” said Joseph Giacalone, a former New York City police sergeant who teaches at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Experts agree that sexual assault is one of the most confounding crimes police confront. Many investigations lack corroborating witnesses and physical evidence. A significant chunk of complaints are reported months or years after the fact. Researchers believe only a third of rapes are reported at all.

Historically, some detectives also discouraged women from pursuing tough-to-prove charges against boyfriends, hus-

bands or close acquaintances. The declining clearance rate could mean that investigators in some places are finally classi-

the percentage of rape cases that are exceptionally cleared compared with those resulting in arrests, but state data can fill out the picture in some places. In Detroit, for instance, police investigated 664 reported rapes last year but made just 44 arrests, according to Michigan data. Another 15 cases were closed for other reasons. That would give Detroit a clearance rate of 8.9 percent, even though only 6.6 percent of reported rapes resulted in an arrest.

Sam Gaspardo said that when she reported in 2011 that she had been sexually assaulted, police in Woodbury, Minnesota, lacked a sense of urgency.

Investigators in the St. Paul suburb expressed frustration that she delayed reporting the attack for more than a year and couldn’t recall the precise date. One time, when she phoned to follow up her case, she was put on hold indefinitely.

“To me, it felt like it was invalidated,” Gaspardo said. “I was just completely dismissed.”

Woodbury Police Cmdr. Steve Wills acknowledged Gaspardo’s complaint fell through the cracks and was not investigated for years, something he called “a system failure.” “Obviously, we own that,” Wills said. Wills said authorities have “no reason not to believe” Gaspardo but decided a few weeks ago they could not prove her alleged attacker had forced her into intercourse.

He acknowledged police would have been in a far better position to investigate the case had they begun looking into the matter immediately.

“It can make a person so angry,” Gaspardo said.

“Are women supposed to start wearing body cameras when they’re alone in a room with somebody?”

Many police sex assault units have heavy workloads and insufficient staffing, said Kevin Strom, the director of RTI International’s Center for Policing Research & Investigative Science, a research center based in North Carolina.

“I think that has a major impact in terms of influencing the ability of law enforcement to successfully clear these cases,” he said.

The clearance rate in rape cases dropped steadily in the 1960s, plateaued at nearly 50 percent through most of the 70s, 80s and 90s, then began a steady yearly decline that persisted through last year, according to the statistics collected by the FBI.

In 2013, the FBI significantly broadened the definition of rape in its Uniform Crime Reporting system to include oral penetration and attacks on men. After the revision, the number of rapes counted in the system soared from an average of around 84,500 per year between 1995 and 2012, to nearly 126,400 in 2016. The clearance rate after the adjustment continued to tick down, falling from 38 percent to 32 percent.

The number leapt again to 166,000 in 2017, a year when sexual assault got unprecedented national attention in the wake of allegations made against President Donald Trump and Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein. Both men deny assaulting anyone.

Rape complaints in New York City, for instance, surged 24.5 percent as the #MeToo movement took off, according to city crime statistics. □



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## Police: Migrant in U.S. illegally kills officer born in Fiji

By **OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ**

Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** —

Ronil Singh came to the U.S. from his native Fiji to fulfill a lifelong dream of becoming an officer, joining a small-town police force in California and working to improve his English.

The day after Christmas, he stopped another immigrant, this one in the country illegally, who shot and killed the corporal, authorities said Thursday.

Authorities said they identified but won't yet name the man who killed Singh of the 12-person Newman Police Department on Wednesday and has not been captured. They believe the attacker is still in the area some 100 miles (160 kilometers) southeast of San Francisco and is armed and dangerous.

"This suspect is in our country illegally. He doesn't belong here. He is a criminal," Stanislaus County Sheriff Adam Christianson, whose agency is leading the investigation, told reporters.

Newman Police Chief Randy Richardson fought back tears as he described Singh, a 33-year-old with a newborn son, as an "American patriot."

"He came to America with one purpose, and that was to serve this country," Richardson said.

Singh drove more than two hours each way to attend the police academy in Yuba City, Richardson said. He joined the Merced County sheriff's office as a reserve officer and worked as an animal control officer in Turlock before being



**This undated photo provided by the Newman Police Department shows officer Ronil Singh of Newman Police Department who was killed by an unidentified suspect.**

hired by the Newman force in 2011.

English was Singh's third language and he had a thick accent but took speech classes to improve his communication, the police chief said.

His death comes amid a political fight over immigration, with President Donald Trump and Congress at an impasse over funding for a border wall that has forced a partial government shutdown.

Trump tweeted about

Singh's killing Thursday, saying it's "time to get tough on Border Security." He ended the post with: "Build the Wall!"

Authorities were looking for a man seen in surveillance photos at a convenience store shortly before Singh was killed. Officials pleaded for help from the public and said they were following up on several leads.

"The sheriff's office will spare no expense in hunting down this criminal," Christianson said.

Singh pulled over the attacker as part of a drunken driving investigation and fired back to try to defend himself, Christianson said.

He was shot a few minutes after radioing that he was pulling over a gray pickup truck that had no license plate in Newman, a town of about 10,000 people, officials said. Singh died at a hospital.

A ground and air search began for the heavyset man pictured at the store with short, dark hair and

wearing a silver chain, jeans, dark T-shirt and a dark jacket with white Ecko brand patches on the shoulders.

A truck believed to have been the one stopped by Singh was later found in a garage in a mobile home park about 4 miles (6 kilometers) from the shooting, where law enforcement officers were serving a search warrant, The Modesto Bee reported.

Investigators were examining the vehicle, police said.

Richardson said his department of 12 is grieving Singh, and other agencies are lending a hand.

"He was living the American dream," said Stanislaus County sheriff's Deputy Royjinder Singh, who is not related to the slain officer but knew him. "He loved camping, loved hunting, loved fishing, loved his family."

Ronil Singh was never in a bad mood and always had a smile on his face, Richardson said.

On his Facebook page, Singh posted pictures on Christmas Eve from a deep-sea fishing trip that produced a big haul of crabs and fish. His profile picture shows him smiling as he stands at a patrol car with his police dog — the same photograph of the officer released by the Sheriff's Department.

Singh is survived by his wife, Anamika, and their 5-month-old son.

"Please help us find this coward," Richardson said of Singh's killer. "We need closure, his family needs closure." □

# Judge orders bail hearing for asylum applicant held 3 years

By LARRY NEUMEISTER  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — An asylum applicant fearing political prosecution in the Ivory Coast has been jailed for nearly three years after entering the country legally, and a judge Thursday decided he deserves a bail hearing.

Adou Kouadio entered the country through an El Paso, Texas, border crossing in February 2016 and was immediately detained pending an asylum hearing. He had his initial application denied in June 2017 and has remained detained amid an appeal of the denial.

The written ruling by U.S. District Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein means Kouadio will appear before a judge within two weeks to consider if he can be freed.

"Thirty-four months of detention is too long without an opportunity for bail," Hellerstein said, adding that the case puts into question whether an "indefinitely lengthy detention of a non-resident" seeking asylum violates the Fifth Amendment.

"This nation prides itself on its humanity and openness with which it treats those who seek refuge at its gates," wrote Hellerstein, who has won praise for 17 years of work presiding over the bulk of litigation resulting from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

A government spokesman declined comment.

A U.S. asylum officer concluded Kouadio, 43, had demonstrated a credible fear of persecution in his homeland based on his political opinions. But after repeated delays in Texas and difficulty getting translators, the case was moved to New York, where Immigration Judge Mimi Tsankov in June 2017 denied his asylum application and ordered him removed. Tsankov said there was insufficient evidence to support his claims that he faces danger if he returns to the Ivory Coast or Gha-

na, where his wife and four children reside.

She wrote that "his claim that his brother was killed simply because they thought that his brother was in fact the respondent is a tenuous claim."

She added: "His claims to having been targeted because of his political activity, especially while he was driving the taxi, are not clear to this court."

The judge said that although there appears to

be unrest in the Ivory Coast, "I also note that there have been significant calls for peace."

Attorney Craig Relles, who represents Kouadio, said the depth of his client's fears are underscored by his willingness to wait three years in U.S. jails for his day in court.

"He fled and left his children behind because he was afraid of getting killed in his homeland," Relles said. □

## Transgender inmate gets rare transfer to female prison

By MICHAEL TARM  
AP Legal Affairs Writer

**CHICAGO (AP)** — A transgender woman serving a 10-year sentence in Illinois for burglary has been moved from a men's to a women's prison in what could be a first for the state, her lawyers announced Thursday.

Deon "Strawberry" Hampton, 27, was moved after a yearlong legal battle and resistance from the Illinois Department of Corrections. Hampton, of Chicago, requested the transfer in 2017 on grounds she'd be less vulnerable to the sexual assault, taunting and beatings she was subjected to in male prisons, according to federal lawsuits filed on her behalf by the MacArthur Justice Center and the Uptown People's Law Center in Chicago.

She was moved within the past week from an all-male prison in Dixon, in northern Illinois, to the women's Logan Correctional Center more than 100 miles away in central Illinois, her lawyers said.

The IDOC's hand was forced last month by a federal court that found Hampton had a strong case that her equal-protection rights were violated. Her lawyers said it was only the second such ruling in the country by a federal court.

One of her attorneys, Vanessa del Valle, hailed the transfer as a victory for transgender rights. But she



This undated photo provided by the Illinois Department of Correction shows Deon "Strawberry" Hampton.

Associated Press

added that the IDOC still hasn't fixed "systemic failures" that lead to abuse of transgender inmates.

"The fight for Strawberry and for all trans women in IDOC has only just begun," del Valle said.

The IDOC confirmed the transfer in a brief Thursday statement, adding that the agency "carefully considered Hampton's housing placement before making the transfer." In previous court filings, the IDOC said one concern was that Hampton would pose a risk to female inmates if moved.

Hampton described how

guards and fellow inmates regularly singled her out for brutal treatment at Menard Correctional Center in southern Illinois and earlier at Pinckneyville Correctional Center. While at the Pinckneyville prison, she alleged guards made her and another transgender inmate perform sex acts on each other as guards hurled slurs and laughed. Unable to comfortably represent herself as female in the male prison — where she couldn't wear her hair or nails long — was devastating psychologically, according to one filing from her lawyers.

"I feel inhuman," Hampton was quoted as saying.

While prison officials in most states do have the option of assigning male-to-female transgender inmates to women's prisons, it happens infrequently.

The latest available federal data from 2016 indicates there were no transgender female inmates in Illinois' two female prisons; there were 28 transgender women in the state's 24 male prisons.

In court filings, the IDOC also cast doubt on Hampton's gender identity — alleging Hampton in initial sessions with prison health workers never claimed to be transgender and, in the words of one filing, "was OK with being male."

But clinical psychiatrist George Brown said in a declaration to a federal court that Hampton showed all the features of someone convinced of their female identity, adding Hampton has identified as female since the age of 5.

Brown also challenged the department's contention that Hampton could be a greater risk to women because she hasn't had sex reassignment surgery, saying such a view "conflicts with all reliable medical literature." He said Hampton's low testosterone levels due to previous hormone treatments meant she was "functionally chemically castrated." □

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# Furious Iraqi lawmakers demand US troop withdrawal

**PHILIP ISSA**

**Associated Press**

**BAGHDAD (AP)** — President Donald Trump's surprise trip to Iraq may have quieted criticism at home that he had yet to visit troops in a combat zone, but it has infuriated Iraqi politicians who on Thursday demanded the withdrawal of U.S. forces.

"Arrogant" and "a violation of national sovereignty" were but a few examples of the disapproval emanating from Baghdad following Trump's meeting Wednesday with U.S. servicemen and women at the al-Asad Airbase.

Trips by U.S. presidents to conflict zones are typically shrouded in secrecy and subject to strict security measures, and Trump's was no exception. Few in Iraq or elsewhere knew the U.S. president was in the country until minutes before he left.

But this trip came as curbing foreign influence in Iraqi affairs has become a hot-button political issue in Baghdad, and Trump's per-



In this Jan. 6, 2016 file photo, Qais Khazali, the head of the Iran-backed Asaib Ahl al-Haq, speaks to his followers during a rally in Basra, Iraq.

ceived presidential faux-pas was failing to meet with the prime minister in a break with diplomatic custom for any visiting head of state.

On the ground for only about three hours, the American president told

the men and women with the U.S. military that Islamic State forces have been vanquished, and he defended his decision against all advice to withdraw U.S. troops from neighboring Syria. He said the U.S. was once again respected as

a nation, and declared: "We're no longer the suckers, folks."

The abruptness of his visit left lawmakers in Baghdad smarting and drawing unfavorable comparisons to the occupation of Iraq after the 2003 invasion.

"Trump needs to know his limits. The American occupation of Iraq is over," said Sabah al-Saidi, the head of one of two main blocs in Iraq's parliament.

Trump, he said, had slipped into Iraq, "as though Iraq is a state of the United States."

While Trump didn't meet with any officials, he spoke with Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi by phone. A planned meeting between the two leaders was canceled over a "difference in points of view" over arrangements, according to the prime minister's office. The visit could have unintended consequences for American policy, with officials from both sides of Iraq's political divide calling for a vote in Parliament to expel U.S. forces from the country.

The president, who kept to the U.S. air base approximately 100 kilometers (60 miles) west of Baghdad, said he had no plans to withdraw the 5,200 troops in the country. He said Ain

al-Asad could be used for U.S. air strikes inside Syria.

The suggestion ran counter to the current sentiment of Iraqi politics, which favors claiming sovereignty over foreign and domestic policy and staying above the fray in regional conflicts.

"Iraq should not be a platform for the Americans to settle their accounts with either the Russians or the Iranians in the region," said Hakim al-Zamili, a senior lawmaker in al-Saidi's Islah bloc in Parliament.

U.S. troops are stationed in Iraq as part of the coalition against the Islamic State group. American forces withdrew in 2011 after invading in 2003 but returned in 2014 at the invitation of the Iraqi government to help fight the jihadist group. Trump's visit was the first by a U.S. president since Barack Obama met with then-Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki at a U.S. base outside Baghdad in 2009.

After defeating IS militants in their last urban bastions last year, Iraqi politicians and militia leaders are speaking out against the continued presence of U.S. forces on Iraqi soil.

Supporters of the populist cleric Moqtada al-Sadr won big in national elections in May, campaigning on a platform to curb U.S. and rival Iranian involvement in Iraqi affairs. Al-Sadr's lawmakers now form the core of the Islah bloc, which is headed by al-Saidi in Parliament.

The rival Binaa bloc, commanded by politicians and militia leaders close to Iran, also does not favor the U.S. Qais Khazali, the head of the Iran-backed Asaib Ahl al-Haq militia that fought key battles against IS in northern Iraq, promised on Twitter that Parliament would vote to expel U.S. forces from Iraq, or the militias would force them out by "other means."

Khazali was jailed by British and U.S. forces from 2007 to 2010 for managing sections of the Shia insurgency against the occupation during those years. □

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# Saudi king orders Cabinet shakeup after Khashoggi's killing



In this Dec. 9, 2018 file photo, released by the state-run Saudi Press Agency, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, left, speaks to his father, King Salman, at a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Associated Press

By AYA BATRAWY  
Associated Press

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)** — Saudi Arabia's King Salman issued a wide-ranging overhaul of top government posts on Thursday, including naming a new foreign minister, following international fallout from the killing of Saudi writer Jamal Khashoggi nearly three months ago.

He also ordered a shakeup of the kingdom's supreme council that oversees matters related to security. The council is headed by the king's son, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, whose powers including roles as deputy prime minister and defense minister, were untouched in the overhaul. It may also signal further efforts to show that changes are being made after the U.S. Senate passed a resolution saying it believes the crown prince is to blame for Khashoggi's grisly murder inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

As the crown prince struggles to convince many in Washington and other Western capitals that he had nothing to do with Khashoggi's killing, the soft-spoken Adel al-Jubeir was replaced as foreign minister by Ibrahim al-Assaf, a longtime former finance minister. Al-Jubeir was appointed to minister of state for foreign affairs at the Foreign Ministry.

Al-Assaf is well known to international investors, having led several Saudi delegations to the World Eco-

nomics Forum in Davos. He served as finance minister under King Fahd and King Abdullah.

Al-Assaf sits on the boards of oil-giant Saudi Aramco and the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund. The crown prince oversees both entities. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Colorado State University and a master's degree from the University of Denver, according to his biography on Aramco's website.

Al-Assaf had been serving as a minister of state last year when he was reportedly detained at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Riyadh along with dozens of high-ranking officials and princes in an anti-corruption sweep led by the crown prince. Shortly after, al-Assaf appeared back at a Cabinet meeting to the surprise of many. The government did not name those detained nor disclose what crimes they were suspected of committing. The Associated Press could not independently confirm reports of al-Assaf's arrest. The opaque anti-corruption sweep helped Prince Mohammed consolidate power and net the government more than \$13 billion in settlements.

The changes announced Thursday include aides to the crown prince, including Musaed al-Aiban as national security adviser — in addition to other positions he holds — and former media minister Awwad al-Aw-

wad as adviser to the royal court. Khalid al-Harbi was named as head of general security.

Turki al-Sheikh, a confidant of the crown prince, was removed as head of the Sports Authority and replaced by Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Faisal. This means al-Sheikh no longer oversees a cybersecurity

and programming body that was led by Saud al-Qahtani, a close aide to the crown prince who was fired from his post and sanctioned by the U.S. Treasury Department for helping to mastermind the plot that led to Khashoggi's killing. Khashoggi wrote critically of the crown prince in columns for The Washington

Post before he was killed. After denying any knowledge of Khashoggi's death for weeks, Saudi authorities eventually settled on the explanation that he was killed in an operation masterminded by former advisers to Prince Mohammed. The kingdom denies the crown prince had any involvement. □

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# Congo election unrest spikes; EU ambassador ordered to leave

By **AL-HADJI KUDRA MALIRO**

**SALEH MWANAMILONGO**  
**MATHILDE BOUSSION**

**Associated Press**

**BENI, Congo (AP)** — Congo's march toward Sunday's election took a nasty turn on Thursday as the government ordered the European Union ambassador to leave the country within 48 hours after the EU prolonged sanctions against the ruling party's presidential candidate.

Elsewhere, police fired live ammunition and tear gas to disperse more than 100 people protesting an election delay in the east, blamed on a deadly Ebola outbreak, that means more than 1 million votes will not count. Protesters set up blazing street barricades and some attacked an Ebola response center, with more than 20 patients fleeing.

The opposition accuses the government of trying to ensure that the preferred candidate of departing President Joseph Kabila is elected, with many Congolese believing Kabila will



**Protesters set up a barricade in the Eastern Congolese town of Beni Thursday Dec. 27, 2018.**

**Associated Press**

continue to wield power behind the scenes.

The foreign minister's order, seen by The Associated Press, called the EU ambassador's comportment "reprehensible" and came after weeks of pressure by Congo's government to have the EU sanctions lifted on Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary. The order asks the European Council "urgent-

ly" to recall its envoy.

The EU last year sanctioned Shadary, a former interior minister, for obstructing Congo's electoral process and for a crackdown against protesters angry over the long-delayed vote. It was meant to be held in late 2016.

The EU this month prolonged the asset freeze and travel ban against Shadary, and more than a dozen other people, days after Congo Foreign Minister Leonard She Okitundu pleaded with EU foreign policy chief Fed-

erica Mogherini to lift the sanctions, even for a "probationary period."

There was no immediate comment from the EU ambassador, Bart Ouvry. Congo has resisted what it considers international meddling in the election, vowing to fund the vote itself. Western observer groups are notably absent.

The election delays have led to sometimes deadly protests. The latest postponement pushed the vote from Dec. 23 to Sunday after a fire in the capital,

Kinshasa, destroyed voting materials. Congo's some 40 million registered voters will decide the fate of a vast country that is rich in the mineral wealth central to smartphones and electric cars but desperately poor in infrastructure and basic services. First, though, they have to make it to the polls. Thursday's protest in Beni occurred a day after Congo's electoral commission announced that voting would be delayed until March for Beni and Butembo city because of the Ebola outbreak. The rest of the country still votes on Sunday, with "definitive" results announced on Jan. 15 and the inauguration three days later.

Opposition candidates call the delay a ploy to hurt their chances in areas where sentiment has turned against the ruling party in recent years. The opposition coalition behind presidential candidate Martin Fayulu has called for a "ghost town" strike throughout Congo on Friday.

The reasons given for the latest delay aren't credible, Fayulu told the AP. He called on all Congolese to remain calm and vote without violence. □

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## China ex-deputy intelligence chief given life sentence

**Associated Press**

**BEIJING (AP)** — China's former deputy intelligence chief was sentenced Thursday to life in prison for corruption.

Ma Jian has been found guilty of crimes including accepting bribes and insider trading, said a court in the northeastern port city of Dalian.

The court said in a statement online that Ma used his political power to aid the business operations of Guo Wengui, a real estate billionaire wanted by Chinese authorities.

The New York-based Guo has published a slew of online videos in which he makes sensational allegations of corruption in the



**In this image made from Dec. 27, 2018, CCTV video, China's former deputy intelligence chief Ma Jian appears in a courtroom in the northeastern port city of Dalian, China.**

**Associated Press**

upper echelons of China's ruling Communist Party. Guo gained control of a national securities company after Ma sent letters addressed from the state

security bureau to threaten and pressure individuals to hand over their shares to Guo.

Separately, Ma also obtained insider information about the same company whose shares his relatives later purchased, resulting in profits of more than 49 million yuan (\$7.2 million).

Ma is the latest top official to be ensnared in Chinese President Xi Jinping's banner anti-corruption campaign, which he launched shortly after taking power in 2012.

Xi pledged to take down both high-level "tigers" and low-level "flies" in a drive to purge the ruling Communist Party of rampant corruption. □



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## Official: Russian weapon 27 times faster than speed of sound

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV  
Associated Press

**MOSCOW (AP)** — Russia's new strategic weapon has rendered any missile defenses useless at a small fraction of their cost, officials said Thursday.

The Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle flies 27 times faster than the speed of sound, making it impossible to intercept, Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov told Russian state television.

The new weapon "essentially makes missile defenses useless," he said.

Borisov spoke a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin oversaw what he described as the conclusive successful test of the Avangard and hailed it as a reliable guarantee of Russia's security for decades to come.

In Wednesday's test, the weapon was launched from the Dombrovskiy missile base in the southern Ural Mountains. The Kremlin said it successfully hit a practice target on the Kura shooting range on Kamchatka, 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) away.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, and Chief of General Staff of Russia Valery Gerasimov oversee the test launch of the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle from the Defense Ministry's control room in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2018.

The Defense Ministry released footage from the test launch, in which a ballistic missile could be seen blasting from a silo in a cloud of smoke, but it hasn't released any images of the vehicle itself.

Putin said the Avangard will enter service with the Russian Strategic Missile Forces next year. The test comes amid bitter tensions in

Russia-U.S. relations, which have been strained over the Ukrainian crisis, the war in Syria and the allegations of Moscow's meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Sergei Ivanov, a former Russian defense minister, said in televised comments that the Avangard constantly changes its course and altitude as it flies through the

atmosphere. He emphasized that unlike previous nuclear warheads fitted to intercontinental ballistic missiles that follow a predictable trajectory allowing it to calculate the spot where they can be intercepted, the Avangard chaotically zigzags on its path to its target, making it impossible to predict the weapon's location.

A smiling Ivanov likened the weapon's flight through the atmosphere to a pebble skipping off the surface of water. Ivanov, who now serves as Putin's adviser, said the Avangard could be fitted to the Soviet-made UR-100UTKh intercontinental ballistic missile, which is code-named SS-19 Stiletto by NATO.

He noted that Russia has a stockpile of several dozen such missiles, which are in a factory-mint condition and not filled with fuel, allowing them to serve for a long time to come. Ivanov added that they could be put in existing silos, sharply reducing the costs of Avangard's deployment.

He noted that Russia began to develop the Avangard after the 2002 U.S. withdrew from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and started to develop defenses against ballistic missiles.

Moscow feared that the U.S. missile shield could erode its nuclear deterrent, and Putin announced in 2004 that Russia was working on a new hypersonic weapon. □

Associated Press



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## Lobster divers risk injury, death in Honduras

By **RODRIGO ABD MOISES CASTILLO**  
Associated Press

**PUERTO LEMPIRA, Honduras (AP)** — Saul Ronaldo Atiliano was diving for lobster in the clear waters off Honduras' Caribbean coast when he felt a pressure, a pain in his body. And he knew he'd gotten the sickness that has killed or disabled so many of his Miskito comrades.

"The pressure attacked me deep in the water," said Atiliano, a 45-year-old Miskito who for 25 years has dived for lobster, most of which winds up is exported to the United States.

Thousands of men across the Mosquitia region of Honduras and Nicaragua depend on lobster fishing to eke out a living. And like Atiliano, hundreds have been stricken with the bends — decompression sickness caused when nitrogen bubbles form in divers' bodies. Some are paralyzed. Some are killed.

With more than 60 per cent of its 9 million people living in poverty, Honduras is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, and the Mosquitia is one of the most impoverished areas.

Among exotic, tropical vegetation along the Caribbean coast, the region is sprinkled with small fishing villages where indigenous villagers live in clapboard houses. A sign of the poverty — and also the innocence of childhood — kids play with trucks made of plastic juice boxes with lids for wheels. For many grown-ups, the only op-



In this Sept. 9, 2018 photo, a diver holds onto his catch of lobsters during a fishing journey in the Miskito coast near Cay Savannah, Honduras.

tion they've found to cope with poverty is diving, no matter the risks. In the Mosquitia, diving permeates everyday life. In the fishing village of Kaukira, worshippers are called to church by the sound of a hammer on a diving tank instead of a bell. Safe standard diving techniques call for a gradual ascent to the surface to eliminate the nitrogen that the body's tissues absorb during a dive, and for a limit to the number of dives a person makes in a day. But many of the divers of Mosquitia dive deeply, surface quickly and then go back for more, racing to collect as much lobster as possible. The boats, where they spend days playing cards and talking among themselves between dives, often have only rudimen-

tary safety equipment and use aging tanks and masks. Just how many have been stricken is somewhat unclear, though all agree it's a large number for such small communities. Jorge Gomez Santos, a former president of the Association of Disabled Honduran Miskito Divers, said this month that at least 2,200 Miskitos now work on the boats, and he said at least 1,300 have been disabled since 1980. Gomez, who uses a wheelchair, said 14 have died this year alone. A study more than a decade ago cited by the Pan American Health Organization reported there were around 9,000 divers in the Mosquitia, and around 4,200 — 47 percent — were disabled by decompression sickness. Nearly all, it

found, had suffered symptoms. A diver makes 75 lempiras (\$3) per pound of lobster and 7 lempiras (28 cents) for each sea cucumber. An average 10-pound (4.5-kilogram) daily haul of lobster is a windfall in one of the most impoverished regions of the Americas, so many take the risk, and many suffer for it, like Atiliano, who dove for 25 years without a problem until that day in September. The father of 10 was paralyzed on the boat, which didn't reach the docks for another day and a half. Fellow divers then drove him about 10 blocks to the hospital with a U.S.-donated hyperbaric chamber in city of Puerto Lempira, the area's largest city. Decompression sickness is usually treatable with ses-

sions in such high-pressure, oxygen-rich chambers, but there are only a few available along the coast, and divers often must wait several days before they can be treated — reducing the chances of recovery.

"It's the first accident I've had," Atiliano said, speaking in Miskito through a translator. He appeared exhausted, with a blank stare, after a session of more than three hours in the chamber. He had shown little outward sign of improvement after that early treatment. Another patient at the chamber was Charles "Charly" Melendez, a 28-year-old Miskito who said he been diving since he was 16 and had harvested 60 pounds of lobster on the day in November 2017 that he was injured.

Even now, after nine sessions, he hasn't recovered. For a man who always made his living diving, it's a nightmare being confined to a wheelchair.

"I still can't stand up by myself," he said. "I can't sit for a long time; after an hour my body hurts."

Cedrack Waldan Mendoza, the physical therapist operating the chamber, said the divers are driven by poverty, and even if injured, return to the boats.

"You run into them in the street and ask them why they're going (back to diving) and they say it's because their kids are hungry," Waldan Mendoza said. "When someone tells you that their kids are hungry there's no need to ask another question." □

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# Yearend celebration and awards ceremony honor Playa Linda team members



**ORANJESTAD – Playa Linda Beach Resort associates enjoyed a festive holiday party held recently in the ballroom of the Aruba Marriott. A dinner and dance gala included a highlight of the annual award ceremony, honoring associates who were standouts among an already highly qualified and dedicated team.**

The year-end event, as well as the mid-year party, is intended as an annual thank you to the entire team, but the award ceremony provides the opportunity to

recognize the best of the best. This year was no different with the Employee of the Year going to Rousanne de Weever, who has excelled in her role in HR, in which she helps shape, inform and enrich a close-knit Playa Linda team. Manager of the Year Pauline Taylor-Dijo was recognized for her outstanding contributions in similarly meeting the unique needs of visitors as the head of guest relations. Showing promise and deserving of praise are fellow honorees, Rookie of the Year Yahaira Jimenez and



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**Yearend celebration and awards ceremony honor Playa Linda team members**

Continued from Page 14

It was a close tally this year, with so many associates demonstrating a work ethic that goes above and beyond their job description. Department of the Year was also a tough pick with other Playa Linda depart-

ments likewise showing immense teamwork and the ability to rise above different challenges. In the end, Engineering received the top honor as Department of the Year.

Often referred to in reviews of the resort, it is the friend-

liness, talent and dedication of employees that has helped define the Playa Linda experience and which has earned the resort's spot as a beloved timeshare resort over the course of Playa Linda's 35-year history. The year-end event helps mark the sea-



son as well as celebrates the strength of the Playa Linda family of employees.

Congratulations and wishes for a Bon Pasco were shared among the entire team. □

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It is also for busy people who do not have time to spend standing in line at the grocery store. Jared Pick, CEO and founder of

the company said, "Our mission is to provide quality products and convenient services to our customers that will allow them more time to enjoy their vacation and the wonders of Aruba, One Happy Island!" Pick's family is originally from Aruba where his grandfather, known as Chipi Chipi, started La Moderna. GroceriesToGo Aruba is a family owned business where Karl Pick is CFO and Marilyn Pick is Marketing Director. GroceriesToGo Aruba, [www.GroceriesToGoAruba.com](http://www.GroceriesToGoAruba.com), is the first full service online grocery delivery business in Aruba. "The need to fill the families grocery order without having to take time away



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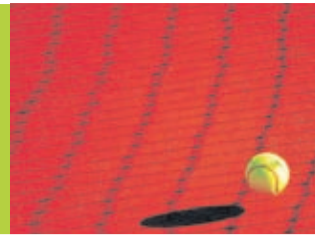
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# SPORTS



## The half-dozen times sports made you smile in 2018

By JIM LITKE  
AP Sports Writer

Sports contributed plenty of the same old agita this year — bad bets, empty boasts, taunts, tiffs and scuffles, plus the occasional riot — but its fair share of wry smiles, too.

There were courageous losers, random acts of kindness and a handful of wins handled with such grace it made you want to get up and dance.

Whoever called March mad never dreamed a 98-year-old nun would steal the show at the Final Four. In Mississippi, a homecoming queen swapped her tiara for a helmet and wound up kicking the game-winner for her high school team. In Akron, Ohio, LeBron James went back to the future and unveiled a state-of-the-art school for at-risk kids, promising the kind of support he yearned for in the same town as a youngster himself.

And as feel-good moments go, this might have been the most hopeful development of all: teddy-bear throwing became “a thing,” stretching from the west side of Canada to the heart of Europe.

Here are six of the most heartwarming moments of 2018:

### LOYOLA'S NOT-SECRET-FOR-LONG SECRET WEAPON

Never mind that Sister Jean Delores Schmidt arrived at the Final Four a few months shy of 99. Or that her last minute of playing time — for her girls' high school team — was chalked up in the late 1930s.

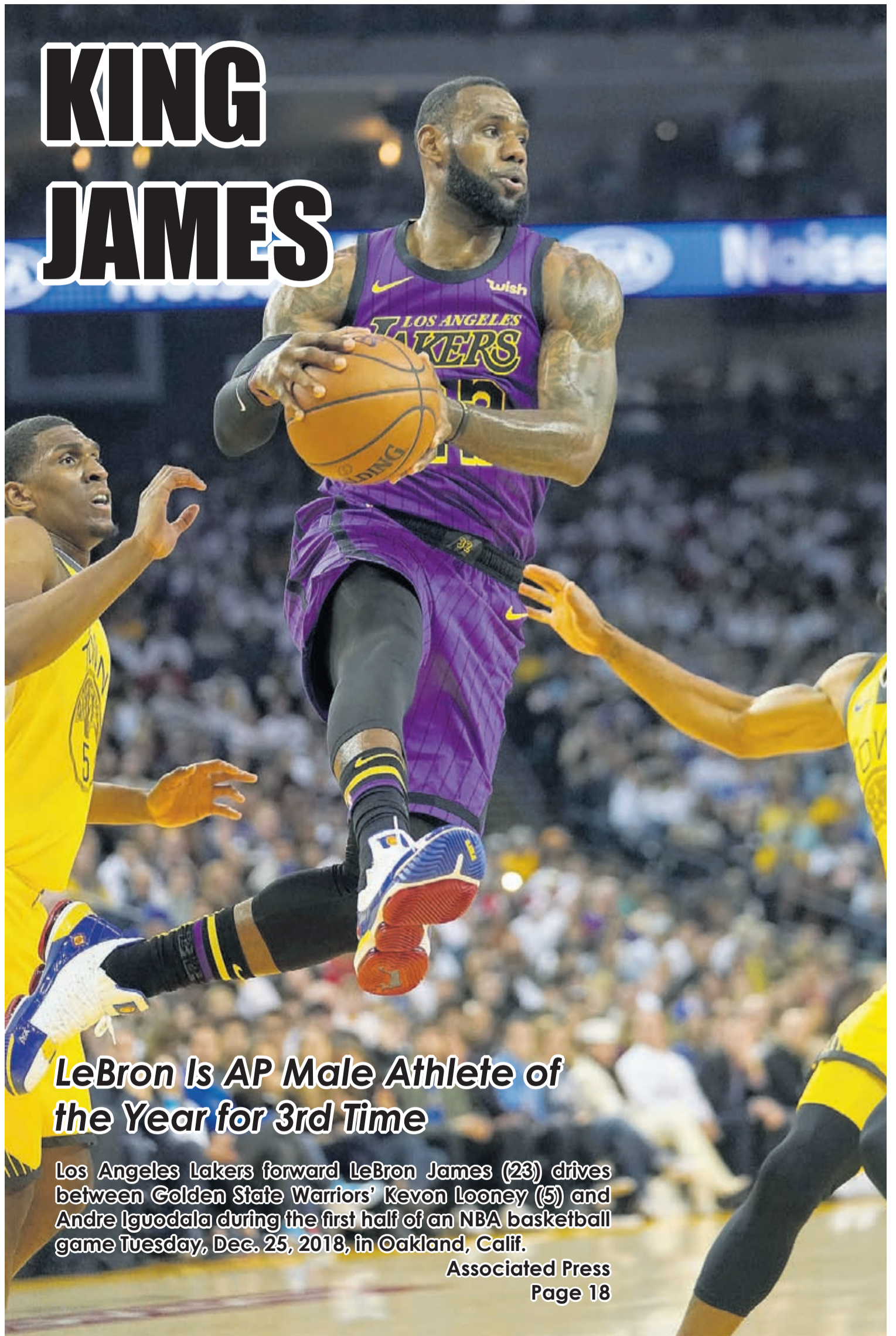
# KING JAMES

## LeBron Is AP Male Athlete of the Year for 3rd Time

Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) drives between Golden State Warriors' Kevon Looney (5) and Andre Iguodala during the first half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2018, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press  
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# He promised: LeBron James is the AP's male athlete of 2018

By **TIM REYNOLDS**  
**AP Basketball Writer**

LeBron James went to the NBA Finals for the eighth consecutive year.

He changed addresses again, leaving his Cleveland home for the second time to join the Los Angeles Lakers in the biggest move of free agency over the summer.

He remained arguably the dominant player in the basketball, adding even more glitz on a legacy that reached epic status long ago.

It was, by any measure, a fantastic year for James.

And even without a title, it may have been his most significant year.

For the third time, James has been selected as The Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year — after 2018 saw him continue to excel on the court, open the “I Promise” school for at-risk children in his hometown of Akron, Ohio, and further use his voice as an activist who bristled at being told to “shut up and dribble.”

“I would describe it as a success because I was able to inspire so many people throughout the year,” James said. “I got to go back to China, to Paris, to Berlin, I opened up a school.

And all these kids I was able to see, all over the world and in my hometown, I was able to inspire, to make them think they can be so much more than what they think they're capable of being. That was my outlook for 2018.”

James received 78 points in balloting by U.S. editors and news directors announced Thursday, while Boston Red Sox star Mookie Betts was second with 46. Alex Ovechkin of the Washington Capitals was third, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes was fourth and Triple Crown winner Justify was fifth.

On the court, James remained dominant. He averaged 28.7 points, 8.8 rebounds and 8.4 assists in 2018 between his time with the Cavaliers and Lakers, playing in 102 games



**In this Tuesday, Oct. 2, 2018, file photo, Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James, left, follows through on a dunk as Denver Nuggets forward Paul Millsap, center, and guard Monte Morris watch during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles.**

**Associated Press**

through Thursday.

“In addition to being on everyone’s short list as one of the league’s all-time greatest players, LeBron is among the hardest working players and is a thoughtful and impactful leader,” NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said. “He serves on the executive committee of the Players Association even as he builds an impressive media company of his own.

And what’s most inspiring, and no surprise given his talent and focus, is how he’s done all of this while embracing his unique opportunity to positively impact communities in need.”

James becomes the third man to win the award at least three times, joining Lance Armstrong (a four-time winner from 2002 through 2005), Tiger Woods (1997, 1999, 2000 and 2006) and Michael Jordan (1991, 1992 and 1993).

Armstrong won the Tour de France in each of his years as the AP recipient, — though he was later stripped of the titles in a doping scandal.

Woods won at least one major and was the PGA’s

Player of the Year in all four of his AP-winning years.

Jordan’s three awards coincided with his first three NBA championships in Chicago. And James’ first two times getting the award were in 2013 and 2016, years where his fingerprints muddled up the Larry O’Brien Trophy in a title celebration. And James’ closest rivals in the AP balloting this year — Betts and Ovechkin — also won titles in 2018.

James’ year included no championship, no scoring title, no MVP award. But some of the people closest to James still considered 2018 to be his finest year yet.

“I like to talk about generations,” said Miami guard Dwyane Wade, one of James’ best friends.

“There will never be another Michael Jordan because he was the first to be a global superstar, the first to take the NBA to another level.

There will never be another LeBron James, and a lot of it is from what he’s done away from the game.

Him understanding his voice has been so refresh-

ing and so important to the culture and his friends.”

The “I Promise” school is perhaps James’ most prized accomplishment yet. It opened in July for 240 third- and fourth-graders, a public school in Akron that is perhaps like none other. Families — not just the kids — get support there, whether it’s by helping put food on the table or providing adult education or even legal assistance.

And this is just the start. James and his LeBron James Family Foundation have enormous plans for the school in the years ahead.

“It is already such a success,” James said. “And it’s something that I never thought was possible until we made it happen. So yes, it’s been a pretty good year.”

A busy year, too. He had a documentary series called “Shut Up and Dribble,” which discusses the role athletes have in the current political and cultural climate.

His show “The Shop,” featuring James and friends talking about life in the back-

drop of a barbershop, has been enormously popular.

James has faced criticism in recent days for posting rap lyrics that included the phrase “Jewish money,” for which he apologized, and even rival coaches have spoken out about how he’s used his fame for good.

“To this day, he hasn’t missed a step,” San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said earlier this year.

“He hasn’t fallen off the ledge and he’s been a brilliant example for millions of kids, especially kids with lesser opportunity and haven’t had the same advantages as others.”

On the court, he was already an icon.

Off the court, he’s looking to be one as well in the years ahead.

“The next star is out there,” James said. “And I’m not just talking sports. Doctor, nurse, pilots, they’re out there.

The one thing they need is knowing that people care about them and care about their lives. I believe it’s part of my job, and I take it very seriously, to try to tap into that.” □

# Raptors top Heat 106-104, improve NBA's best record

By The Associated Press

**MIAMI (AP)** — Kawhi Leonard scored 30 points, Danny Green's 3-pointer with 22.7 seconds left put Toronto ahead for good and the Raptors improved the NBA's best record to 26-10 by topping the Miami Heat 106-104 on Wednesday night.

Green had 18 points and Fred VanVleet added 16 for the Raptors, who survived a wild fourth quarter that saw 12 lead changes and four ties. Miami had three shots on the game's final possession, with Dwyane Wade and Justise Winslow missing 3s and Wade having a chance at a tip-in that wouldn't fall.

Winslow scored 21 points for Miami, which saw its five-game winning streak snapped. Josh Richardson scored 17 and Hassan Whiteside scored 16 for Miami, which was 6 for 12 from the foul line — while Toronto was 19 for 23.

James Johnson and Tyler Johnson each scored 12 for the Heat, while Wade had 10. Pascal Siakam added 10 for the Raptors.

**NETS 134, HORNETS 132 2OT**  
**NEW YORK (AP)** — Joe Harris made the tiebreaking layup with 3.4 seconds left in the second overtime and finished with a season-high 27 points as Brooklyn outlasted Charlotte.

Spencer Dinwiddie had 37 points and 11 assists for the Nets, who won for the ninth time in 10 games. Rondae Hollis-Jefferson finished with 16 points and 15 rebounds, and rookie Rodions Kurucs had 13 points and 12 boards.

Kemba Walker scored 35 points for the Hornets, but the Nets turned to a zone defense and whatever else they could do to force the ball out of his hands as much as possible late in the game. Jeremy Lamb added 31 points in the opener of a home-and-home series.

**PISTONS 106, WIZARDS 95**

**DETROIT (AP)** — Blake Griffin had 23 points and nine rebounds, Andre Drummond

got his 10th straight double-double, and Detroit beat Washington.

Detroit had lost 9 of 11 but used a hot start in the third quarter to pull away. Drummond had 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Langston Galloway scored 22 points off the bench.

The Wizards lost for the eighth time in 10 games and are 4-16 on the road. John Wall had 21 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, and Bradley Beal scored 21 points.

**SUNS 122, MAGIC 120 OT**

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)** — Devin Booker scored 35 points and T.J. Warren added 24 points, including all four Phoenix points in overtime, to lead the Suns.

Kelly Oubre Jr. scored had 19 points and Josh Jackson added 10 for Phoenix, which has won five of its last seven games.

D.J. Augustin led Orlando with 27 points and six assists. Nikola Vucevic had 22 points and 13 rebounds, and Terrence Ross scored 18 points off the bench. Orlando has lost four straight. Phoenix outscored the Magic 4-2 in overtime. Vucevic hit a jumper with 4:26 left in the extra period to account for Orlando's only points on 1-for-10 shooting.

**TIMBERWOLVES 119, BULLS 94**

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Derrick Rose had 24 points and eight assists in just his second career game in the United Center against his former team, lifting Minnesota.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 20 points and 20 rebounds as the Timberwolves won their second straight on the road.

Rose, the top pick in the 2008 draft, played his first seven seasons in Chicago and was named the NBA's most valuable player in 2011.

Zach LaVine had 28 points in 26 minutes off the bench and Lauri Markkanen added 16 for Chicago, which had won two straight and three of five before

Wednesday.

**PACERS 129, HAWKS 121**

**ATLANTA (AP)** — Thaddeus Young scored 21 points, Domantas Sabonis and Tyreke Evans each added 19, and Indiana won its third straight game.

The Pacers have won 10 of 12. Indiana coach Nate McMillan used nine players, eight of whom finished in double figures.

Kent Bazemore tied a career high with 32 points, John Collins added 21 points and 11 rebounds and Dewayne Dedmon had 18 points and a season-best 15 rebounds for the rebuilding Hawks, who had won three straight.

The Hawks, who have the league's second-worst offense, stayed close by hitting 17 3-pointers.

**GRIZZLIES 95, CAVALIERS 87**

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)** — Marc Gasol had 20 points, nine rebounds and six assists to help Memphis beat Cleveland.

Kyle Anderson and Mike Conley added 15 points



Miami Heat center Hassan Whiteside (21) defends against Toronto Raptors forward Kawhi Leonard (2) as he shoots the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2018, in Miami.

Associated Press

each, with Conley handing out eight assists. Garrett Temple and Jaren Jackson Jr. had 11 points each.

Cleveland dropped its fourth straight. Jordan

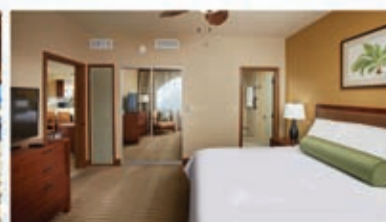
Clarkson led the Cavaliers with 24 points off the bench, and rookie Collin Sexton had 16 points and six assists. Cedi Osman had 10 points. □

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# Kelce, Kittle chase Gronkowski's record for best TE season

By JOSH DUBOW

AP Pro Football Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)

— Getting a Twitter follow from Travis Kelce was one of the major accomplishments this season for San Francisco 49ers second-year tight end George Kittle.

Now heading into the final game of the season, Kittle is in a race with Kelce for the most productive season ever for a tight end.

Kelce goes into Kansas City's season finale against Oakland with 1,274 yards receiving, the fourth-most ever for a tight end. He needs 54 yards against the Raiders to break the mark set by New England's Rob Gronkowski in 2011.

But Kelce might need more than that to hold off Kittle, who goes into San Francisco's finale against the Los Angeles Rams with 1,228 yards on the season and a chance to pass not only Gronkowski but also Kelce with a big game.

Kelce and Kittle have put up their huge numbers this season in very different ways. Kelce is more a



In this Dec. 13, 2018, file photo, Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce (87) during warm-ups before the start of an NFL football game in Kansas City, Mo.

downfield threat, with his average catch coming 7.5 yards beyond the line of scrimmage, a number comparable to some of the

most productive receivers in the league like Antonio Brown and Michael Thomas.

Kittle does most of his work

after the catch, gaining an average of 9.8 yards after making the catch — a number surpassed only by four running backs who make their average catch in the backfield.

Kittle has 775 yards in all after the catch, trailing only Carolina running back Christian McCaffrey with 824. The only other players since at least 2010 with more yards after the catch in a season are Le'Veon Bell (816 in 2014) and Matt Forte (788 in 2014).

"The thing he is doing better, that I can say he has done better than any tight end I have had, is what he is doing after the catch," coach Kyle Shanahan said. "He does a good job beating man coverage, and does a good job in his routes and does a great job blocking. But when that ball is in the air, the play is just starting. He is trying to catch it. He runs angry and runs confidently, that he expects to score on every look."

Here's a look inside some more interesting numbers heading into Week 17:

**SPLENDID START:** Cleveland's Baker Mayfield heads into the final week

with 24 TD passes, the second-most ever for a rookie. Mayfield needs three TD passes this week to break the record set by Peyton Manning in 1998.

**RECORD RECEPTIONS:** McCaffrey and Philadelphia tight end Zach Ertz have already set receiving records. McCaffrey's 106 receptions this season are the most ever by a running back, beating the mark of 102 for Forte in 2014. McCaffrey has also joined Forte and Hall of Famer LaDainian Tomlinson (2003) as the only players with at least 1,000 yards rushing and 100 catches in a single season.

**RUN TO DAYLIGHT:** Running the ball has never been easier in the NFL, with the average carry going for 4.42 yards per attempt. That would be the highest mark for a season in the NFL since at least 1940. The previous high was 4.29 ypc in 2011. This season is also on pace for the fewest rush attempts per game with just 25.9, a tick below the 26.0 mark set in 2016.

**DOMINANT PATS:** Few teams have ever had a run as dominant as the one by the New England Patriots under coach Bill Belichick and quarterback Tom Brady. The Patriots won their 10th straight AFC East title, setting a record for most consecutive playoff berths, and have tied San Francisco (1983-98) for the most consecutive 10-win seasons with 16. New England has 199 wins the past 16 years, 35 more than the second-place Steelers. That gap is bigger than the difference between Pittsburgh and 16th-place Cincinnati with 131.

**UNDRAFTED GEM:** Denver running back Phillip Lindsay passed the 1,000-yard rushing mark last week, joining Dominic Rhodes and LaGarrette Blount as the only undrafted rookies to top 1,000 in a season in the Super Bowl era. Lindsay has 1,037 yards on the season but will end up 68 yards shy of breaking Rhodes' record set in 2001 for Indianapolis after being sidelined by a wrist injury in Week 16. □

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## Sports 2018

Continued from Page 17

Or that she's listed in the team media guide (way too generously) at 5-foot, wearing custom-made maroon and gold-trimmed Nikes that would make any baller proud.

Because every time little Loyola of Chicago sprung another upset on its improbable run to the Final Four, Coach Porter Moser and his Ramblers' post-game interviews were just the opening act. If you really wanted to know how a small Jesuit university kept knocking over rivals twice its size — the tactics AND the theology behind it — you stuck a microphone in front of Sister Jean.

The team's chaplain, unofficial scout and eternal optimist was a natural on TV. Rarely at a loss for words, she wasn't shy about crediting faith for Loyola's surprising basketball bounty, either. She had a wicked sense of humor to boot. As the season of Lent — 46 days when Christians swear off worldly pleasures ahead of Easter — was nearing its end with the Ramblers still playing, a CBS reporter leaned in:

"What did you give up for Lent?" she asked.

Sister Jean smiled impishly.

"Losing," she said.

A bobblehead was commissioned. The "Today" show came calling. After the Ramblers lost the semifinal, she spent the next few months recuperating from hip surgery, celebrating a birthday and collecting awards. But she was back in her office by the start of the new basketball season, updating scouting reports and tailoring pregame prayers.

"When we came off the court after the Michigan loss, the players said to me, 'Don't worry Sister Jean, we'll do it again next year,'" she recalled during a recent interview, then bowed her head, smiled and sighed.

**'I DIDN'T THINK, I JUST RAN OVER THERE'**

Ty Koehn and Jack Kocon were buddies dating back

to Little League. In early June, in the ninth inning of a Minnesota high school baseball sectional final, they stood 60 feet, 6 inches apart.

Koehn, on the mound, was putting the finishing touches on a 4-0 win for Mounds View High. Kocon, at the plate for Totino-Grace High, was the last out in his way.

Three strikes later, Koehn's teammates raced out of the dugout and began celebrating on the mound. But their star pitcher was somewhere else, standing at home plate with his arms around Kocon.

"I told him I loved him," Koehn said afterward, "and he's my brother and our friendship will always last longer than this silly game and its silly outcome."

A video capturing that moment went viral, but no one who knew the young men was surprised.

"He's a tremendous competitor," Mounds View coach Mark Downey said about Koehn, "but he understands there is a bigger picture."

Koehn's, teammates understood, too, even if it didn't stop them from playfully stealing hugs in practice for the rest of Mounds View's tournament run.

**WHAT TO GET THE GIRL WHO HAS EVERYTHING**

Winning either contest would have provided Kaylee Foster with the memory of a lifetime. She had a good feeling about one, but not the other.

"I was pretty sure I wasn't going to be homecoming queen," the Ocean Springs senior recalled, "but I was pretty sure I was going to make that kick."

Foster notched both — thanks to years of preparation and one of the more unusual costume changes in sports.

Moments after being crowned in a pregame ceremony, she handed off her tiara and flower bouquet, swapped her gown and heels for a jersey and cleats and wondered if her night could get any better.

Then, with game in over-



In this Nov. 27, 2018, file photo, Loyola of Chicago's Sister Jean shows off the NCAA Final Four ring she received before an NCAA college basketball game between Loyola of Chicago and Nevada in Chicago.

time and the score tied 12-12 — thanks to a pair of Foster field goals earlier in the game — she split the uprights with the decisive extra point. Afterward, she donned her tiara again and posed for photos wearing No. 15. Foster's confidence on the field came as no surprise. She played soccer at Ocean Springs and had kicked for the varsity football team since her sophomore year.

But her win in the pageant wasn't such a long shot, either. Foster was a member of the homecoming court all four years.

**BACK TO SCHOOL**

LeBron James struggled just to get to school as a kid. He missed 82 days in fourth grade because his single mother, Gloria, didn't have a car or another way to get him there.

So even though he makes his living in Los Angeles these days, James made sure to be on hand and on time when the "I Promise School" opened this year. And not just because he was footing the bill.

"I know the ups and downs," James told the first class of third- and fourth-graders during the opening ceremony. "I know everything they dream about. I know all the nightmares they have because I've been there."

The school, a partnership

between James' family foundation and Akron City Schools, offers year-round programming, family development skills and days that begin at 9 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. It also provides parents of I Promise students with help to earn their GEDs or high school diplomas. A planned expansion will include grades 1-8 by 2020, but James is already seeing dividends from his efforts. He launched the "I Promise Program" in Akron in 2011 with a handful of community-based events. Young men and women who took part in those programs routinely approach him now to boast about where they're going to college.

"Half the battle," James said, "is the kids just having someone that they are like, 'Oh, this guy believes in us.'"

**IT AIN'T OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER**

Lineo Chaka of Lesotho was an afterthought as runners toed the line for the women's 10,000-meter final at the Commonwealth Games last April in Australia.

The 25-year-old had little experience at the distance, and it soon became apparent she was struggling just to complete the race. For her last three laps, Chaka had the oval to herself. So the real surprise was not that she crossed the finish line five minutes behind the winner, Uganda's Stella

Chesang, or three minutes behind the 18th and next-to-last competitor, Scotland's Beth Potter.

It was the welcoming party waiting for her there.

In a touching display of sportsmanship, Australian runners Celia Sullohern (who finished sixth), Madeline Hills (eighth) and Eloise Wellings (16th) lingered there, clapping and cheering Chaka on, then embraced her after she took her final strides.

"I'd like to think," Hills said, "that if I had that day, there would be someone standing on the track for me."

**TRY TOPPING THIS, SANTA**

Raining teddy bears down from the stands got off to a modest start in a quiet corner of western Canada 25 years ago.

That's when Kamloops Blazers fans, asked to bring stuffed animals to the game for a donation to local charities for kids, bypassed the collection boxes and instead flung some 2,400 onto the ice after a hometown goal.

The tradition grew modestly in the years after that, usually observed around Christmas and largely at minor league hockey rinks across Canada and the United States. There were occasional, but limited, sightings in the intervening years in places as far-flung as Sweden, Italy and Australia. □

## Serena welcomes rule change on players back from pregnancy

**ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP)** — Serena Williams has welcomed the extra protection given to new mothers when they return to the women's tennis tour.

"It's great," the 23-time Grand Slam champion said on Thursday in quotes published by BBC Sport. "Women that are younger can go out there and have kids and not have to worry about it, and not have to wait until the twilight of their years to have children."

The WTA rule changes were agreed on this month and are meant to ensure players are not penalized after they return from pregnancy or an injury that causes a long absence. The changes were prompted in part by the experiences of former No. 1 players Williams and Victoria Azarenka, both of whom returned to competition after giving birth. The WTA announced that players returning to the tour may use a special ranking for up to three years after



Serena Williams of the U.S. talks to journalists on the opening day of the Mubadala World Tennis Championship in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Thursday, Dec. 27, 2018.

Associated Press

the birth of a child, and the exemption can be used for seedings at big events.

"Having gone through the experience myself really opened my eyes. Would I have done it sooner had there been different rule changes? I don't know," Williams said in Abu Dhabi ahead of an exhibition tournament where she played her sister Venus in a one-off match. "But now there is an

opportunity, people don't have to ask that question." Williams was unseeded at the French Open in her first major since the birth of her daughter — despite having won the previous major she played, the 2017 Australian Open. Williams was seeded 25th at Wimbledon and 17th at the U.S. Open, and she reached the finals and lost at both of those majors. □

## Nadal looks to Australian Open with confidence after surgery

**ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP)** — Rafael Nadal is confident he can be fit for the Australian Open as he chases an 18th Grand Slam title.

A right knee injury forced Nadal to retire from his U.S. Open semifinal in early September — his last competitive match — and the 32-year-old Spaniard had ankle surgery at the start of November.

Asked Thursday to assess his fitness level out of 10 ahead of the Mubadala World Tennis Championship in Abu Dhabi, Nadal said: "I don't know. I am not that good with numbers."

"I started about two weeks ago and I am taking small steps forward. I am just making sure I am moving forward and it's not a step backwards. I know I have time to be ready for Melbourne at 100 percent."



Rafael Nadal of Spain talks to journalists on the opening day of the Mubadala World Tennis Championship in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Thursday, Dec. 27, 2018.

Associated Press

The Australian Open starts Jan. 14.

Nadal, who won his 17th Grand Slam at the French Open in June, said he was happy with his progress "but of course I need to prove myself in competitions and hopefully, playing here will help me take the first steps."

"It's been a very exciting

12 months. Last year here, I was still carrying the injury of the elbow that resulted in the surgery," Djokovic said.

"I am grateful that this season has taught me a lot about myself as a tennis player and as a person. I really had to dig deep to sort of turn the table in my favor." □



In this Nov. 2, 2018, file photo, Jon Jones talks in New York about his mixed martial arts light heavyweight bout against Alexander Gustafsson at UFC 232.

Associated Press

## Jon Jones defiant after failed drug test forces UFC 232 move

By **GREG BEACHAM**

AP Sports Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Jon Jones is defiantly defending his role in the decision to move UFC 232 from Nevada to California on six days' notice after he tested positive for low levels of a banned steroid.

The former light heavyweight champion gave a passionate, occasionally bizarre performance Thursday at a news conference ahead of his title fight against Sweden's Alexander Gustafsson at the Forum in Inglewood, California, on Saturday night.

Jones (22-1) expressed regret for the enormous inconveniences caused by his latest failed doping test, which cost the UFC and the card's other fighters millions in earnings. But the star-crossed superstar also boorishly berated a reporter asking about his doping history and went on several lengthy rants about the unfairness of the entire situation, suggesting the positive test could have been ignored. □

## Bill Baillie, holder of obscure running records, dead at 84

**WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)** — New Zealand athlete William "Bill" Baillie, who once held world records in the now obscure 20,000-meter and one-hour running events, has died. He was 84. Athletics New Zealand said Baillie died on Christmas Day. At the time Baillie broke the records they had a higher status than today and were held by Czech great Emil Zatopek. Baillie set both marks in the same race in Auckland in 1963. In one hour he covered 12 miles, 960 yards, 7 inches or 20.19 kilometers, after reaching the 20K mark in 59 minutes, 28.6 seconds.

In 2013 he recalled that "there was no doubt in my mind that I was going to do it on that particular day. When it finished, and everyone had gone home, I thought I better go home and mow the lawns." Baillie competed in the 5,000 at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics where he finished sixth. He also competed in four Empire and Commonwealth Games in 1954, '58, '62 and '66.

No cause of death has been released but an item published online Friday in the obituaries section of The New Zealand Herald said Baillie "passed away peacefully in his sleep ... Bill has just finished the race of his life, and only he knows what his time was." □

# How Fox's 25 seasons of covering the NFL changed the game

By **JOE REEDY**

Terry Bradshaw thought his career as a football analyst was over in 1993 when CBS lost the NFL rights to Fox. But instead of going back to cattle ranching, he has had a front-row seat to the biggest sports broadcasting startup of the past quarter-century.

"It seems like an eternity. We all have occasionally talked about where we started. We've had all of these innovations that has transformed broadcasting on television," Bradshaw said.

It was Bradshaw who helped usher in Fox's coverage of the NFL in 1994 riding a horse around Los Angeles before arriving at the Fox set in Hollywood. That entrance helped set the tone that still drives the network's coverage and has included eight Super Bowls. "Terry is what Fox attitude is all about," said Joe Buck, who has gone from one of the announcers for regional games to the voice of Fox's major properties. "They played that during the preseason seminar this year and I got choked up. It was a beautiful TV moment."

David Hill, who built Fox Sports and came up with many of its innovations, still considers Bradshaw his most important hire.

"He is the core of what Fox Sports is — he's funny, self-deprecating, but gets the job done," Hill said.

That core was put in motion 25 years ago this month when Fox won the rights to broadcast NFL games for \$1.6 billion over four years. Besides its personalities, the network has given us the scoreboard, audio that brings viewers closer to the game, the one-hour pregame show, and a big production feel for sporting events. The fact that Hill was able to build a sports division from scratch in eight months remains incredible considering most networks now take two to three years to build. "It was so intense that it stays with you. Thinking back, though, we never had a chance to second guess anything because



This March 5, 2013, file photo shows Jay Glazer, from left, Howie Long, Terry Bradshaw and Michael Strahan attending the Fox Sports Media Upfront party celebrating the new Fox Sports 1 network in New York.

every day was important," he said.

Many of the announcers and production personnel that started with Fox in 1994 are still there as the network is in its 25th season of broadcasting the NFL. Bart Simpson is still going strong on Sunday nights, but Fox has become a grown-up network.

"We've grown from the rebellious new kid on the block and are now looked at as a responsible producer of major sports. We're now the establishment," said Richie Zrontz, the lead producer for Fox's top NFL game as well as coordinating producer for the network's NASCAR coverage. The NFL's decision to go with Fox continues to reverberate on a number of levels, not only with football but in the way sports rights costs are perceived among network executives. Among the things we have learned:

## **FOOTBALL IS ENTERTAINMENT**

Fox's credo of "same game, new attitude" really applied to Hill. The affable Australian, who had built sports networks in England and Australia, was tasked with building Fox Sports in eight months.

Hill offered a fresh set of eyes when it came to evaluating pro football on

television, and the first opinion he had is there wasn't enough fun or entertainment on Sunday broadcasts.

Hill's vision of Fox's philosophy took root with the pregame show. Not only was it an hour, but it was done in Los Angeles instead of New York. He had a simple formula for his pregame crew: a host, former offensive player, former defensive player and coach.

"David understood that he wanted the viewer entertained. We cover the news but we tend to do things a little more jovial," Bradshaw said.

Hill, who now runs his own production company after leaving Fox in 2015, liked Howie Long after seeing one of his interviews, but wasn't sold after an audition. It was so vanilla that Hill told Long to come back the next day with a different attitude. Long was more relaxed in the second audition and was hired.

Bradshaw and Long have been the backbone of Fox's pregame show despite their diverse personalities.

Hill also suggested having a comedian do predictions and having a weather report as a segment. The Los Angeles setting also gave the show a different vibe, which is what he wanted

all along.

"All the cameramen for the pregame had worked on sitcoms during the week. They all wanted to work on football," he said. "The camaraderie of everyone flowed throughout the entire unit."

The pregame show was a hit from the beginning and also showed that viewers had an appetite to consume as much football content as possible.

"I remember opening weekend when I got home I had a couple college buddies that were raving about the pregame show and how great and fun it was with everyone," said Troy Aikman, who was Cowboys quarterback in 1994 before joining the network seven years later. "It was refreshing, new and unique, and that set the tone for the network."

## **ELEVATING THE GAME**

The hiring of Pat Summerall and John Madden as the top broadcast team gave Fox instant credibility, but the network also helped launch the network football careers of Joe Buck, Thom Brennaman, Kenny Albert and Kevin Harlan.

"I was sitting in the room during a seminar and looking at Summerall, Madden, Dick Stockton and Matt Millen while listening to David Hill talk, and I couldn't

believe I was in the same room," Buck said. "I had been around my dad (Hall of Fame broadcaster Jack Buck) and knew what the standard was and how it had been done, and now I was hearing how different things were going to be. It was intimidating and exciting."

Production-wise, Fox ushered in the era of the constant time and scoreboard along with audio that brought viewers closer to the action. The scoreboard may look like a simple graphic, but at the time it was a technical marvel. Instead of having a camera fixated on a clock, a black box was embedded in each scoreboard so that the time and other data could be transmitted to Los Angeles and production trucks at the stadium.

"There was a guy named Richard Flanigan who had to go to each stadium with a ladder and screwdriver and put the black box in each scoreboard. But he had to build a black box for each scoreboard because they were all different," said Eric Shanks, a broadcast associate in 1994 and now Fox Sports' executive producer and CEO. "The attitude from David was the bigger, the louder, the better. We were doing things with graphics and sound effects that only used to exist in big production movies."

## **THE NFL RIGHTS ARMS RACE**

When the NFL entered television negotiations in 1993, many predicted it would be lucky to get near the \$3.6 billion received from ABC, CBS, NBC, TNT and ESPN for four years in 1990. Fox's bid of \$1.58 billion, along with increases from ABC, NBC, TNT and ESPN, increased the rights fees to \$4.4 billion — and longtime NFL broadcast partner CBS lost the NFC rights to Fox.

The contracts also ended up benefiting the players. The salary cap started in 1994 and many predicted with decreased rights fees it would be \$32 million per team. However, the surprise influx of cash pushed it to \$34 million. □

Associated Press

# Did 2018 usher in a creeping tech dystopia?

By **MATT O'BRIEN**  
**AP Technology Writer**

We may remember 2018 as the year when technology's dystopian potential became clear, from Facebook's role enabling the harvesting of our personal data for election interference to a seemingly unending series of revelations about the dark side of Silicon Valley's connect-everything ethos.

The list is long: High-tech tools for immigration crackdowns. Fears of smartphone addiction. YouTube algorithms that steer youths into extremism. An experiment in gene-edited babies.

Doorbells and concert venues that can pinpoint individual faces and alert police. Repurposing genealogy websites to hunt for crime suspects based on a relative's DNA. Automated systems that keep tabs of workers' movements and habits. Electric cars in Shanghai transmitting their every movement to the government.

It's been enough to exhaust even the most imaginative sci-fi visionaries. "It doesn't so much feel like we're living in the future now, as that we're living in a retro-future," novelist William Gibson wrote this



In this Aug. 8, 2018, file photo, a mobile phone displays a user's travels using Google Maps in New York.

month on Twitter. "A dark, goofy '90s retro-future." More awaits us in 2019, as surveillance and data-collection efforts ramp up and artificial intelligence systems start sounding more human, reading facial expressions and generating fake video images so realistic that it will be harder to detect malicious distortions of the truth.

But there are also countermeasures afoot in Congress and state government — and even among tech-firm

employees who are more active about ensuring their work is put to positive ends. "Something that was heartening this year was that accompanying this parade of scandals was a growing public awareness that there's an accountability crisis in tech," said Meredith Whittaker, a co-founder of New York University's AI Now Institute for studying the social implications of artificial intelligence.

The group has compiled a long list of what made 2018 so ominous, though many are examples of the public simply becoming newly aware of problems that have built up for years. Among the most troubling cases was the revelation in March that political data-mining firm Cambridge Analytica swept up personal information of millions of Facebook users for the purpose of manipulating national elections.

"It really helped wake up people to the fact that these systems are actually touching the core of our lives and shaping our social institutions," Whittaker said. That was on top of other Facebook disasters, including its role in fomenting violence in Myanmar, major data breaches and ongoing concerns about its hosting of fake accounts for Russian propaganda.

It wasn't just Facebook.

Google attracted concern about its continuous surveillance of users after The Associated Press reported that it was tracking people's movements whether they like it or not.

It also faced internal dissent over its collaboration with the U.S. military to create drones with "computer vision" to help find battlefield targets and a secret proposal to launch a censored search engine in China. And it unveiled a remarkably human-like voice assistant that sounds so real that people on the other end of the phone didn't know they were talking to a computer.

Those and other concerns bubbled up in December as lawmakers grilled Google CEO Sundar Pichai at a congressional hearing — a sequel to similar public reckonings this year with Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and other tech executives. "It was necessary to convene this hearing because of the widening gap of distrust between technology companies and the American people," Republican House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy said.

Internet pioneer Vint Cerf said he and other engineers never imagined their vision of a worldwide network of connected computers would morph 45 years later into a surveillance system

that collects personal information or a propaganda machine that could sway elections.

"We were just trying to get it to work," recalled Cerf, who is now Google's chief internet evangelist. "But now that it's in the hands of the general public, there are people who ... want it to work in a way that obviously does harm, or benefits themselves, or disrupts the political system. So we are going to have to deal with that."

Contrary to futuristic fears of "super-intelligent" robots taking control, the real dangers of our tech era have crept in more prosaically — often in the form of tech innovations we welcomed for making life more convenient.

Part of experts' concern about the leap into connecting every home device to the internet and letting computers do our work is that the technology is still buggy and influenced by human errors and prejudices. Uber and Tesla were investigated for fatal self-driving car crashes in March, IBM came under scrutiny for working with New York City police to build a facial recognition system that can detect ethnicity, and Amazon took heat for supplying its own flawed facial recognition service to law enforcement agencies.

In some cases, opposition to the tech industry's rush to apply its newest innovations to questionable commercial uses has come from its own employees. Google workers helped scuttle the company's Pentagon drone contract, and workers at Amazon, Microsoft and Salesforce sought to cancel their companies' contracts to supply tech services to immigration authorities.

"It became obvious to a lot of people that the rhetoric of doing good and benefiting society and 'Don't be evil' was not what these companies were actually living up to," said Whittaker, who is also a research scientist at Google who founded its Open Research group. □

## Nationwide internet outage affects CenturyLink

**BOISE, Idaho (AP)** — Some CenturyLink customers across the country were without the internet as outages stretched from New York to California.

The company said in a statement Thursday that its network was "still experiencing a disruption" and that it was working to restore services. It provided no other details, including how many customers were affected.

Jessica Rosenworcel, a member of the Federal Communications Commission, said via Twitter that this was a "nationwide outage" and her agency needed to investigate.

It appeared that most of the trouble was in the West. The Idaho Statesman reports that the internet problems led to the temporary shutdown of phone services at the Idaho Department of Correction and the state's Department of Education.

There were reports of ATM machines not working in Idaho and Montana. □



# How taxpayers can deal with new state, local deduction caps

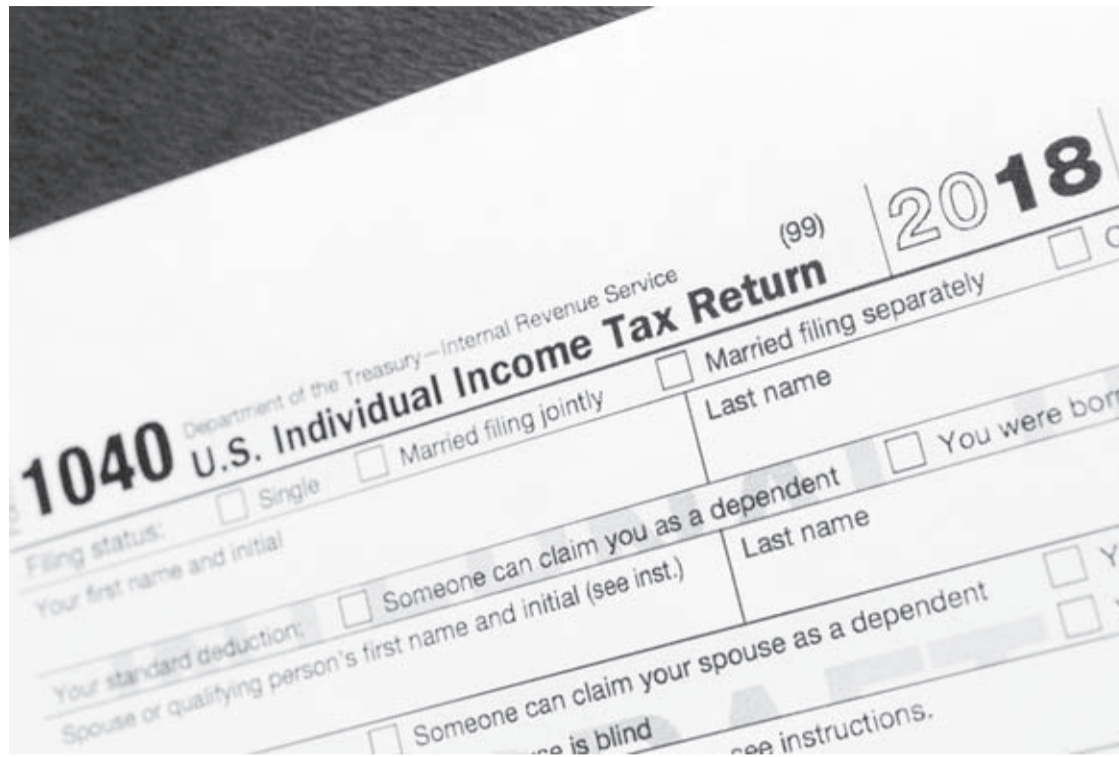
By **TINA OREM**  
Associated Press

If you paid a lot of state and local taxes in 2018, buckle up this tax season — new laws cap how much of those payments you can deduct on your federal tax return. That means more of your income could be taxable this year. But before you worry too much, here are a few suggestions from tax pros on how to cope with the changes.

## 1. FIND OUT IF THE CAP MIGHT AFFECT YOU

Generally, property taxes and either sales taxes or state and local income taxes are deductible on federal returns. But this year, there's a cap on how much you can deduct — \$10,000 (\$5,000 for a married taxpayer filing a separate return). That could make more of your income taxable.

Buddy Newton, a certified public accountant and senior tax manager at Stockman, Kast, Ryan and Co. in Colorado Springs, Colorado, offers a quick way to check whether the cap could affect you: Pull out your 2017 tax return and find Schedule A. If the amount on line 9 was greater than \$10,000, you might not be able to deduct as much state and local tax this year as you did last year. Newton estimated that as



This July 24, 2018, file photo shows a portion of the 1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return form for 2018 in New York.

many as 75 percent of his firm's individual clients will hit this new cap on state and local taxes. It's often referred to as "the SALT cap."

"A lot of our clients are paying more than \$10,000 a year just alone in state income tax," he says.

## 2. POUNCE ON OTHER TAX BREAKS

If the SALT cap affects you this year, more of your income could be taxable. However, the federal tax brackets also changed this year, meaning your income might be subject to a lower

tax rate than last year. That could offset some of your loss, notes Joe Seifert, a CPA at the Delap accounting firm in Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Other new rules this year might help, too. Parents may qualify for the larger child tax credit, which rose from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per child, for example, or small-business owners may be able to take the new 20 percent pass-through deduction, Seifert says.

"There's give and take in this thing for most taxpayers. People need to focus

on maybe what was given to you in other areas, instead of being so concerned about what was taken away," he says.

## 3. THINK ABOUT BUNCHING YOUR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

The standard deduction has nearly doubled to \$12,000 for single filers, \$18,000 for heads of household and \$24,000 for joint filers. That could drive many taxpayers to abandon itemizing altogether this year.

A married couple filing jointly would need to cobble together more than

\$24,000 in deductions, for example, to make itemizing pay off. Because the deduction for state and local taxes is now capped at \$10,000, a couple filing jointly would need to drum up at least another \$14,000 of deductions to make itemizing financially worthwhile.

One way to get over that bigger hump is by "bunching" charitable contributions, Seifert says. For example, a couple who gives \$5,000 to charity every year might be better off giving \$15,000 once every three years instead.

## 4. PLAN FOR A NEW TAX LIFE

"I think the biggest thing is, just make sure that you reach out to your CPA early enough to do your year-end planning and think about the solutions that are on the table," Newton says.

There's also the possibility of moving to a place with lower taxes. It's not the easiest thing to do, "but it's an idea," he says. □

Associated Press

# US consumer confidence tumbles in December

By **PAUL WISEMAN**  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — U.S. consumer confidence tumbled this month as Americans began to worry that economic growth will moderate next year. But consumer spirits are still high by historic standards. The Conference Board, a business research group, said Thursday that its consumer confidence index fell to 128.1 in December, down from 136.4 in November and lowest since July. The index measures consumers' assessment of current economic conditions and their outlook for the next six months. Both fell in December. Consumers'

expectations for the future dropped to the lowest level since November 2016.

The December readings "still suggest that the economy will continue expanding at a solid pace in the short-term," said Lynn Franco, the Conference Board's senior director of economic indicators.

"While consumers are ending 2018 on a strong note, back-to-back declines in expectations are reflective of an increasing concern that the pace of economic growth will begin moderating in the first half of 2019." For now, the U.S. economy

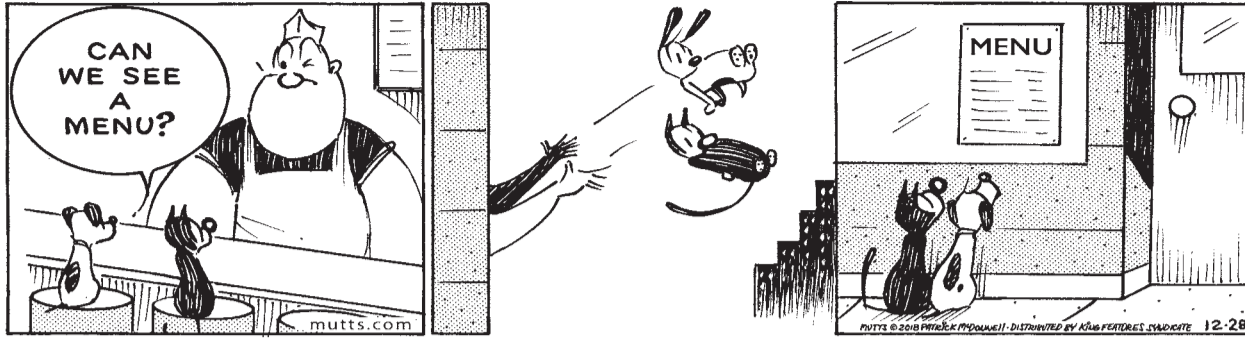
is solid. Economic growth clocked in at a healthy 3.4 percent annual pace from July through September after surging 4.2 percent in the second quarter. At 3.7 percent, the unemployment rate is the lowest in nearly five decades. □

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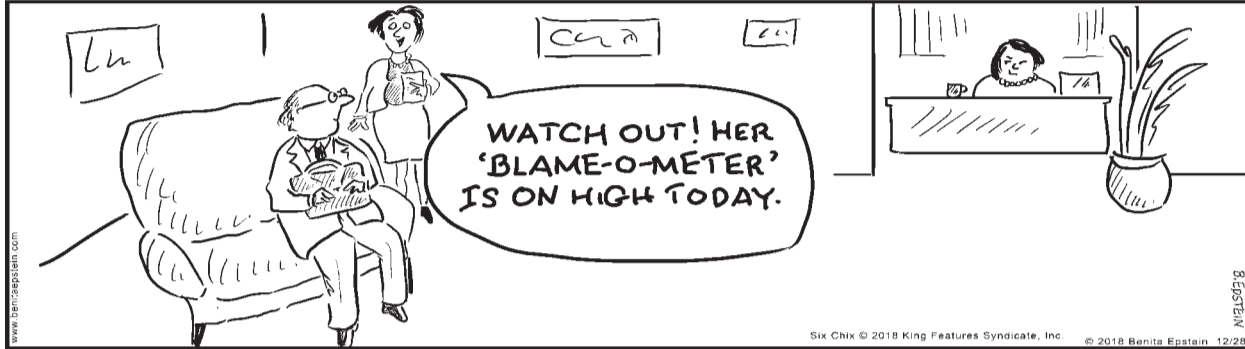
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Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.  
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668  
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Acc. #23951903  
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772  
**Assistant Director**  
Xiomara Arends  
**Editor in Chief**  
Linda Reijnders  
([linda.reijnders@cspnv.com](mailto:linda.reijnders@cspnv.com))  
Liza Koolman (Management assistant)  
**Editors**  
Richard Brooks  
Jeancarlo Trinidad  
**Sales**  
Linda Reijnders  
([linda.reijnders@cspnv.com](mailto:linda.reijnders@cspnv.com))  
Marijke Croes  
**Classifieds**  
Rachelle Danje  
([rachelle.danje@cspnv.com](mailto:rachelle.danje@cspnv.com))  
**Distribution and Collection**  
[accounting@bondia.com](mailto:accounting@bondia.com)  
**Social / Website**  
Jeancarlo Trinidad  
Weststraat 22  
T: 582-7800  
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**Mutts**



**6 Chix**



**Blondie**



**Mother Goose & Grimm**



**Baby Blues**



**Zits**



**Conceptis Sudoku**

2	1	5						6
4		7						9
	5	2						
8	3		6					
				9		4		5
					1		8	
	4					6		7
6				3		2		1

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 12/28

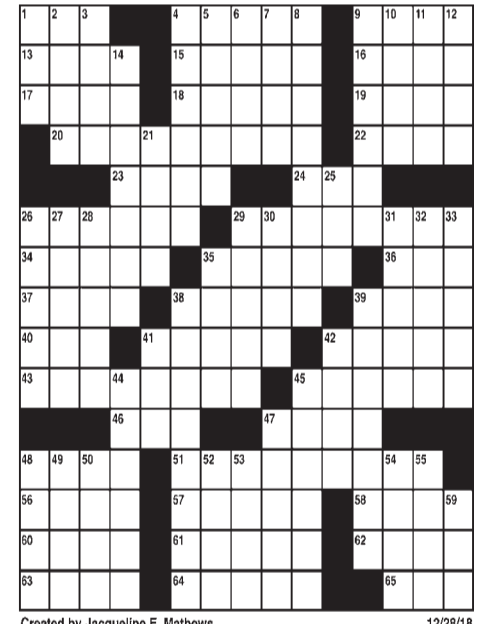
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

9	4	3	1	5	8	6	2	7
1	7	8	6	9	2	4	3	5
6	5	2	4	3	7	8	1	9
2	8	4	3	6	9	5	7	1
7	3	6	5	8	1	2	9	4
5	9	1	2	7	4	3	8	6
4	6	7	8	1	3	9	5	2
3	2	9	7	4	5	1	6	8
8	1	5	9	2	6	7	4	3

**ACROSS**

- 1 Coolidge, for one
- 4 Cookie type
- 9 Make jokes
- 13 Per person
- 15 Nimble
- 16 Sore
- 17 \_\_\_ out; become frayed
- 18 Songbirds
- 19 Vandyke's spot
- 20 Most weaselly
- 22 "The \_\_\_ Ranger"
- 23 Twirl
- 24 \_\_\_ into; attack verbally
- 26 Diminish
- 29 With child
- 34 Glove material
- 35 Tragic Goethe play
- 36 Cattle call
- 37 Over-the-hill
- 38 Shoestrings
- 39 Facts & figures
- 40 "Cry \_\_\_ River"
- 41 Lubricated
- 42 Labyrinths
- 43 Fort Smith's state
- 45 Most infrequent
- 46 Traitor
- 47 Male animal
- 48 File drawer, perhaps
- 51 Adorn
- 56 Gehrig & Rawls
- 57 Unsuspecting
- 58 TV series for Mark Harmon
- 60 Egg on
- 61 Firstborn of two
- 62 \_\_\_ away; donated
- 63 Peepers
- 64 Gets dizzy
- 65 Was introduced to



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 12/28/18

**Thursday's Puzzle Solved**

S	P	A	A	V	O	I	D	W	R	A	P
N	E	E	D	P	I	N	T	O	H	E	R
B	E	N	S	P	R	E	C	E	D	E	N
C	S	I	S	L	U	S	H	A	N	T	S
C	A	K	E	S	B	I	C				
A	L	I	B	I	S	P	U	R	E	S	T
T	O	L	L	S	P	I	C	Y	T	A	E
R	O	L	E	S	P	E	C	K	P	A	C
A	M	I	S	A	R	A	S	M	A	G	I
S	N	A	P	P	Y	L	E	N	G	T	H
B	U	S	G	O	O	S	E				
E	R	R	O	R	S	T	R	A	W	R	P
B	E	A	U	T	I	C	I	A	N	L	I
B	A	R	N	D	A	N	C	E	I	N	N
S	P	E	D	O	T	T	E	R	E	G	G

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**DOWN**

- 1 Crow's comment
- 2 Hairy animals
- 3 Money lent
- 4 Customer with no appointment
- 31 Blow away
- 32 Short letters
- 33 Raise a glass to
- 35 "Deck the halls with boughs of holly, \_\_\_"
- 38 Hearer
- 39 Term of affection

- 5 Once more
- 6 Forest danger
- 7 Antlered animals
- 8 Unable to sit still
- 9 Actress Smith
- 10 Canyon sound
- 11 Part of the leg
- 12 Actress Daly
- 14 Ironed
- 21 Pinnacle
- 25 Insurance policy seller; abbr.
- 26 Peruvian pack animal
- 27 Rarin' to go
- 28 Porterhouse or New York
- 29 Walks the floor
- 30 Regretted
- 41 "Cat \_\_\_ Hot Tin Roof"
- 42 Shopping area
- 44 Ascends
- 45 Measuring sticks
- 47 Carve a sloping edge
- 48 Chimney pipe
- 49 Like a bloody horror movie
- 50 Gigantic
- 52 Man or boy
- 53 \_\_\_ one's time; wait
- 54 Con game
- 55 Bee's home
- 59 \_\_\_ up; arrange

# Classifieds

## Halley Time Travel

### Tropicana Resort

3 Bedroom WK # 51 Room # 1506  
Ocean View \$25,000  
1 Bedroom WK # 51&52 Room #1556  
Ground Floor Waterfall View \$25,000 Both

### Renaissance Suites

1 BR WK # 51 Top Floor Harbor View \$10,000  
1 BR WK # 52 3rd Floor overlook Pool/Ocean View \$15,000

### La Cabana B & C

1 BR WK # 52 4 th Floor \$11,000  
Pool/Ocean View Saturday Check in

### Dutch Village

Studio WK # 52 Room #117  
18 Weeks remain \$7000

### Aruba Divi Phoenix

1 BR WK # 52 Room #502  
11 Weeks remain \$10,000  
Studio WK # 50 Room # 1404  
Penthouse 35 weeks remain \$6500

### Divi Village

1 BR WK # 52 Room# 3308  
25 Weeks remain \$12,000  
1 BR WK# 1 Room# 5501  
24 weeks remain \$ 11,000

### Divi Vilage

Studio WK# 52 Room#6304  
20 Weeks remain \$ 9000  
Studio WK # 1 Room# 8201  
23 Weeks remain \$8000

### Divi Links Golf

Studio Week # 2 Room # 4205  
24 weeks remain \$7500  
1 BR WK # 3 Room #4102  
24 weeks remain \$8500

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### Divi Links Golf

1 BR WK # 1 Room# 4208  
27 weeks remain \$8000  
1 BR WK # 1&2 Room #2252  
32 weeks remain \$ 10,000 Each

### Divi Links Golf

1 BR WK # 51&52 Room# 2106  
35 weeks remain \$ 13,000 Each  
2 BR WK # 3 Room # 4215/4216  
28 weeks remain \$25,000

### Tropicana Resorts

3 BR Wk 51 & 52 Room # 2548  
Ocean View \$ 60,000

### Aruba Divi Phoenix

2 BR Penthouse WK# 1 Room # 672  
28 weeks remain \$ 35 ,000

### Marriott Ocean Club

1 BR Platinum Ocean View \$13,000

1 BR Platinum Ocean Front \$18,000

2 BR Platinum Ocean View \$ 17,000

2 BR Platinum Ocean Front \$ 26,000

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Platinum Plus  
2 BR WK# 51 & 52 Ocean Front \$ 150,000

2 BR WK #51 Ocean View \$ 45 ,000

2 BR WK# 52 Ocean View \$ 49 ,000

2 BR WK #51 Garden View \$40,000

2 BR WK# 52 Garden View \$45,000

### Marriott Surf Club

Platinum  
2 BR Garden View \$15,000  
2 BR Ocean View \$ 18,000  
2 BR Ocean Side \$19,000  
2 BR Ocean Front \$26,000  
3 BR Ocean View \$18,000

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Week 13 Two Bed Unit #4552H  
Fri/Fri \$4,900  
Contact in Aruba  
donjovi7@hotmail.com  
or cell 592 0500  
In US sales.cpv@hotmail.com  
or cell 978 530 6077

210463

### CASA DEL MAR FOR SALE

week 1 Presidential Unit #1313  
2 Br, 2 Bath, Ocean view,  
Sleeps 6  
\$14,900  
E-mail gkoon2@gmail.com

210447

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### DIVI GOLF

**Luxury Studio Unit 2314**  
wk 50 12/14/19, 28 wks left  
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2 1/2 Baths Rm 94-96 \$5600BO  
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Week51&52 Unit D103 2BR \$7,900  
Week51&52 Unit B102 2BR \$6,900  
Week52 Unit C202 2BR Best Offer  
Week51 Unit E104 1BR \$3,900  
Week51&52 Unit E207 1BR \$5,700  
Week52 Unit E305 1BR \$4,900  
Week52 Unit G204 1BR \$4,500  
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### DIVI VILLAGE

**week 17 Studio Rm 3205**  
king bed 4/27/19  
24 weeks left \$3500 BO  
Divi Aruba floating exopt.  
Phoenix 1br, wk 11 to 50  
3/16-12/14 \$3500 BO also a  
studio for \$2900 BO  
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# Pluto explorer ushering in new year at more distant world

By **MARCIA DUNN**

**AP Aerospace Writer  
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)**

— The spacecraft team that brought us close-ups of Pluto will ring in the new year by exploring an even more distant and mysterious world.

NASA's New Horizons spacecraft will zip past the scrawny, icy object nicknamed Ultima Thule (TOO-lee) soon after the stroke of midnight.

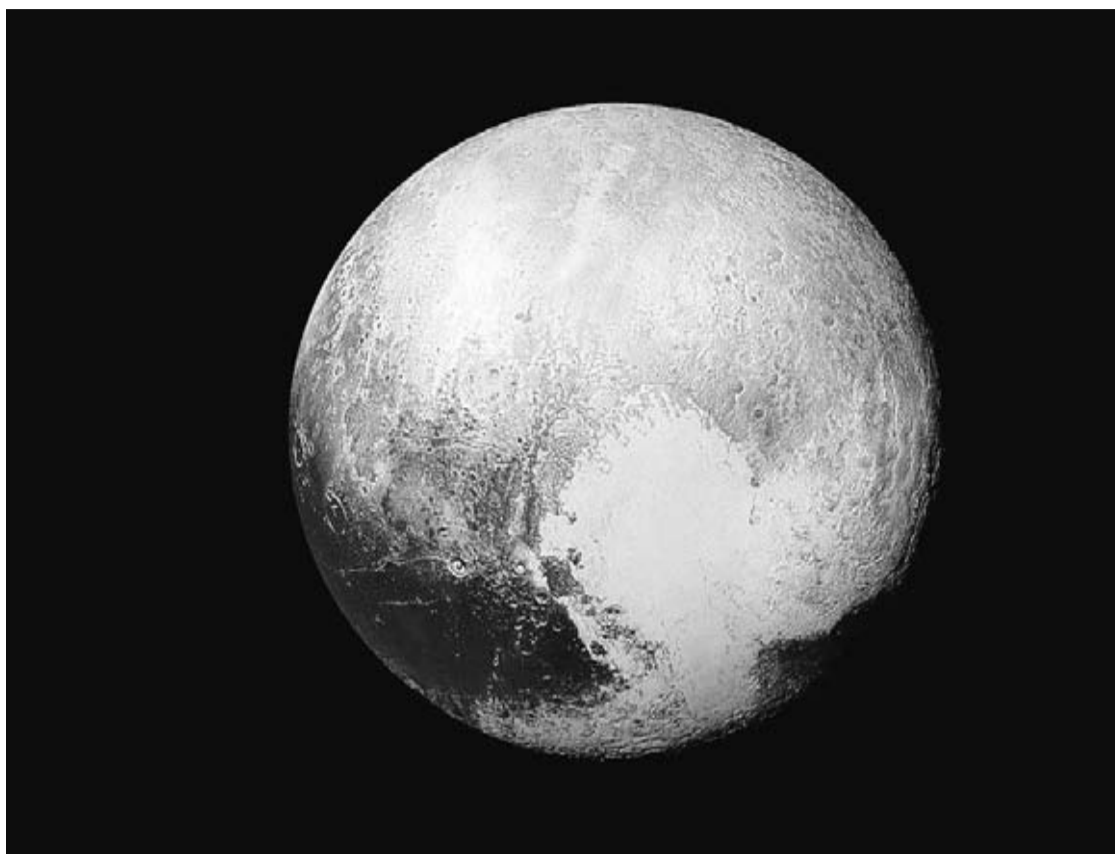
One billion miles beyond Pluto and an astounding 4 billion miles from Earth (1.6 billion kilometers and 6.4 billion kilometers), Ultima Thule will be the farthest world ever explored by humankind. That's what makes this deep-freeze target so enticing; it's a preserved relic dating all the way back to our solar system's origin 4.5 billion years ago. No spacecraft has visited anything so primitive.

"What could be more exciting than that?" said project scientist Hal Weaver of Johns Hopkins University, part of the New Horizons team.

Lead scientist Alan Stern of Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, Colorado, expects the New Year's encounter to be riskier and more difficult than the rendezvous with Pluto: The spacecraft is older, the target is smaller, the flyby is closer and the distance from us is greater.

## **NEW HORIZONS**

NASA launched the spacecraft in 2006; it's about the size of a baby grand piano. It flew past Pluto in 2015, providing the first close-up views of the dwarf planet. With the wildly successful flyby behind them, mission planners won an extension from NASA and set their sights on a destina-



This image made available by NASA on Friday, July 24, 2015 shows a combination of images captured by the New Horizons spacecraft with enhanced colors to show differences in the composition and texture of Pluto's surface.

tion deep inside the Kuiper Belt. As distant as it is, Pluto is barely in the Kuiper Belt, the so-called Twilight Zone stretching beyond Neptune. Ultima Thule is in the Twilight Zone's heart.

## **ULTIMA THULE**

This Kuiper Belt object was discovered by the Hubble Space Telescope in 2014. Officially known as 2014 MU69, it got the nickname Ultima Thule in an online vote. In classic and medieval literature, Thule was the most distant, northernmost place beyond the known world. When New Horizons first glimpsed the rocky iceball in August it was just a dot. Good close-up pictures should be available the day after the flyby.

## **ARE WE THERE YET?**

New Horizons will make its closest approach in the wee hours of Jan. 1 — 12:33 a.m. EST. The space-

craft will zoom within 2,200 miles (3,500 kilometers) of Ultima Thule, its seven science instruments going full blast. The coast should be clear: Scientists have yet to find any rings or moons around it that could batter the spacecraft. New Horizons hurtles through space at 31,500 mph (50,700 kph), and even something as minuscule as a grain of rice could demolish it. "There's some danger and some suspense," Stern said at a fall meeting of astronomers. It will take about 10 hours to get confirmation that the spacecraft completed — and survived — the encounter.

Associated Press

## **POSSIBLY TWINS**

Scientists speculate Ultima Thule could be two objects closely orbiting one another. If a solo act, it's likely 20 miles (32 kilometers) long at most. Envision a baked potato. "Cucumber, whatever. Pick your favorite vegetable," said astronomer Carey Lisse of Johns Hopkins. It could even be two bodies connected by a neck. If twins, each could be 9 miles to 12 miles (15 kilometers to 20 kilometers) in diameter.

## **MAPPING MISSION**

Scientists will map Ultima Thule every possible way. They anticipate impact craters, possibly also pits

and sinkholes, but its surface also could prove to be smooth. As for color, Ultima Thule should be darker than coal, burned by eons of cosmic rays, with a reddish hue. Nothing is certain, though, including its orbit, so big that it takes almost 300 of our Earth years to circle the sun. Scientists say they know just enough about the orbit to intercept it.

## **COMPARING FLYBYS**

New Horizons will get considerably closer to Ultima Thule than it did to Pluto: 2,220 miles versus 7,770 miles (3,500 kilometers vs. 12,500 kilometers). At the same time, Ultima Thule is 100 times smaller than Pluto and therefore harder to track, making everything more challenging. It took 4 ½ hours, each way, for flight controllers at Johns Hopkins' Applied Physics Lab in Laurel, Maryland, to get a message to or from New Horizons at Pluto. Compare that with more than six hours at Ultima Thule.

## **WHAT'S NEXT**

It will take almost two years for New Horizons to beam back all its data on Ultima Thule. A flyby of an even more distant world could be in the offing in the 2020s, if NASA approves another mission extension and the spacecraft remains healthy. At the very least, the nuclear-powered New Horizons will continue to observe objects from afar, as it pushes deeper into the Kuiper Belt. There are countless objects out there, waiting to be explored. □

## Satellite images show collapse of Indonesian island volcano

**JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)**

— Radar data from satellites, converted into images, shows Indonesia's Anak Krakatau island volcano is dramatically smaller following a weekend eruption that triggered a deadly tsunami. Satellite photos aren't available because of cloud cover but radar images from a Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency

satellite taken before and after the eruption show the volcano's southwestern flank has disappeared. Dave Petley, head of research and innovation at Sheffield University who analyzed similar images from a European Space Agency satellite, said they support the theory that a landslide, most of it undersea, caused the tsunami that

killed at least 430 people on Saturday evening. Indonesian authorities are warning people to stay away a kilometer (less than a mile) from the Sunda Strait coastline because of the risk of another tsunami. JAXA's post-eruption image shows concentric waves radiating from the island, which experts say is caused by ongoing eruptions. □

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# Anna and Anita star in epic opera rivalry

By MIKE SILVERMAN  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The fireworks start early this New Year's Eve at the Metropolitan Opera, where two jealous divas locked in a deadly rivalry will be setting off sparks in a new production of Francesco Cilea's "Adriana Lecouvreur."

Russian soprano Anna Netrebko stars as the title character, loosely based on a real-life 18th-century French actress. Anita Rachvelishvili, a mezzo-soprano from the Republic of Georgia, plays the evil Principessa di Bouillon. The women compete for the dashing Maurizio and, in keeping with legend, the Principessa dispatches Adriana by sending her a bouquet of poisoned violets.

The David McVicar production, which also stars tenor Piotr Beczala as Maurizio, will be broadcast live in HD to movie theaters worldwide on Jan. 12.

"Adriana" marks the second time this season the divas have squared off at the Met over their love for the same man. In Verdi's "Aida," Netrebko sang the title role, while Rachvelishvili portrayed the Egyptian princess Amneris. The Associated Press sat down with them following a rehearsal last week, and here are edited excerpts from the conversation:

AP: You had never appeared together before this season, but you've known each other awhile. How did you meet?

Netrebko: I first saw Anita when she was rehearsing for her first-ever 'Carmen' at La Scala. She was a baby (25 years old, in 2009), with a very grown-up voice and an already grown-up personality artistically.

Rachvelishvili: Of course I knew who she was, and she comes in and I was shocked. I was like, oh my god, Anna Netrebko is in my rehearsal. It was a really beautiful feeling because I was a student who was starting. Now after just nine years of my career I'm here singing next to her. I have to be a lucky person.



In this 2018 photo, Ambrogio Maestri, from left, as Michonnet, Anita Rachvelishvili as the Princess of Bouillon, and Anna Netrebko as Adriana Lecouvreur perform during a rehearsal of the Metropolitan Opera's new production of "Adriana Lecouvreur," which opens New Year's Eve, Dec. 31, 2018, at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

AP: What's it like playing romantic rivals when you're friends off-stage?

Rachvelishvili: Knowing Anna, how she is as a person, it's very difficult to look at her with the hate the Principessa must look at her with. I think we are both emotional people so that helps a lot.

Netrebko: We both love music, we're passionate about what we're doing, we have experience on the stage and we love our work.

AP: What are the differing challenges of the two operas?

Netrebko: Aida for me is very hard. Vocally it's a killer. And her personality is not very interesting. I mean, I did what I could from that. But Adriana is more acting, of course, more fun for me personally, and there's more scenes together, the big fighting.

Rachvelishvili: In 'Aida' there's not that much hate between them. Amneris loves her as a sister, it's just that something comes between them (their rivalry for Radames) and she never wants her to die, it just happens and that's all. But in 'Adriana,' my character is really mean, she's really

bad, she's a cold-blooded killer.

Netrebko: But it's so cool.

Rachvelishvili: Yeah, it's really cool to play. And I was thinking a lot about

how I'm going to do it because it's not in me at all. Amneris could be me as a person. Because I could hate someone who takes my man, and you know be

jealous of them and wanting that person to disappear from my life, but not die.

AP: The climax of the opera comes in Act 3 after Adriana learns her rival's identity. She recites a monologue from Racine's 'Phedre' and — just as she reaches the final line about a shameless adulteress — she points her finger at the Principessa. Does Adriana realize she's risking her life when she does this?

Netrebko: I think at that moment she doesn't think anything. She just comes into this kind of trance of speaking this. It's just coming out for her, all this energy because of the stress of what happened a few minutes before.

Rachvelishvili: As someone who sits there onstage and listens to her, it is very emotional, very beautiful, and that's the most difficult moment for me to be hating her. And this really happened. She came to the party and insulted the Principessa in front of everybody. □

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# In 'Cold War,' a love exiled by communism

By **JAKE COYLE**

**Associated Press**

It took "Aquaman" two and a half hours just to put a fancy trident in its hero's hands. Pawel Pawlikowski's latest, "Cold War," follows a doomed romance over 15 years and across much of mid-century Europe in a mere 88 minutes. And you're telling me the guy who can swim fast is the superhero?

In two immaculate films in a row, Pawlikowski has put countless filmmakers to shame with his devastating concision. In his Oscar-winning and surprise arthouse smash "Ida" and now in "Cold War," Pawlikowski distills staggering amounts of story into austere monochrome images so deeply expressive you could dive into them.

"Cold War" is a kind of companion piece to "Ida." It's similarly set in post-war Poland, shot in pristine black-and-white by cinematographer Lukasz Zal, framed in a boxy academy ratio and has jazz music drifting evocatively through it. But "Cold War"



This image released by Amazon Studios shows Joanna Kulig, left, and Tomasz Kot in a scene from "Cold War."

begins with a folk song, sung directly into the camera by a pair of peasants, whose plaintive tune foreshadows the heartbreak to come. "Open up my love, for fear of God," they sing. Pianist Wiktor Warski (To-

masz Kot) is traversing the bleak winter countryside of Poland in 1949 to record folk music and hold auditions for a new school of traditional song and dance. During tryouts, one student stands out to Wiktor: a striking, sultry blonde named Zuzanna, or Zula (Joanna Kulig). She doesn't sing as well as some of the others but she catches the eye of

the immediately infatuated Wiktor. The school's other director dryly notes Zula isn't the mountain girl she pretends to be, plus she's on parole for killing her father.

"He mistook me for my mother so I used a knife to show him the difference," Zula later explains. Wiktor promptly, inevitably falls for her and Zula isn't

far behind. At first, the perilous air of a femme fatale hangs over her. While they lie in a field, she pledges her fidelity to Wiktor even while confessing that she's reporting on him to their communist supervisors. With Zula front and center, the show is a hit, a success the state quickly co-opts for propagandist means. Soon, they are singing communist anthems with an enormous curtain of Stalin draped behind them. While on tour, Wiktor and Zula resolve to flee to West Berlin, but Zula stands him up. It will be years before they reunite in Paris.

In Pawlikowski's film, it's often what happens in between the cuts that hurts the most. Just as crucial moments rob Zula and Wiktor of years together, time simply gets edited out. When they do finally make a life for themselves in Paris, it's warped by the emptiness of exile. They live in a bohemian loft. Wiktor plays in jazz clubs. They make a record of Zula but she curses the French translations of the songs they sang in Poland. A relationship always tumultuous turns tragic without a country. "In Poland you were a man," she sneers. □

**Associated Press**

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<p>JENNIFER JONES   ARMIE HAMMER <b>ON THE BASIS OF SEX</b> MON/THU &amp; SUN: 4:30   9:00 FRI/SAT: 4:30   9:00   11:40</p>	<p>JASON MORNIA   AMBER HEARD <b>AQUAMAN</b> WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON/THU &amp; SUN: 2:00   4:55   7:50 FRI/SAT: 2:00   4:55   7:50   10:45 CXC MON/SUN: 3:15   6:10   9:05</p>
<p>JENNIFER LOPEZ   MILO VENTIMIGLIA <b>SECOND ACT</b> MON/THU &amp; SUN: 4:30   7:10   9:30 FRI/SAT: 4:30   7:10   9:30   11:50</p>	<p>HAILEE STEINFELD   DYLAN O'BRIEN <b>BUMBLEBEE</b> WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON/THU &amp; SUN: 12:30   3:15   5:45   8:15 FRI/SAT: 12:30   3:15   5:45   8:15   10:45 MON/SUN: 1:00   4:00</p>
<p>JAKE JOHNSON   HAILEE STEINFELD <b>SPIDER-MAN</b> WITH THE SPIDER-VERSE WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES GOLDEN GLOBE MON/SUN: 1:30   4:30</p>	<p>JOHN C. REILLY   SARAH SILVERMAN <b>RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET</b> WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES GOLDEN GLOBE MON/SUN: 1:00</p>
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## Miley Cyrus, Liam Hemsworth reportedly got married

**Associated Press**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth appear to have tied the knot amid reports the couple got married in a secret wedding ceremony. Cyrus posted three black-and-white photos of her and Hemsworth on the singer's Instagram and Twitter accounts on Wednesday. She captioned her photos writing "10 years later ..." and "12.23.18," possibly indicating the day they exchanged vows. The 26-year-old Cyrus shared another photo of her and Hemsworth kissing. He also posted a photo of them with words "My love." In each picture, Cyrus is



In this Aug. 8, 2013, file photo, actor Liam Hemsworth and singer and actress Miley Cyrus arrive on the red carpet at the US premiere of the feature film "Paranoia" at the DGA Theatre in Los Angeles.

**Associated Press**

dressed in all-white while the 28-year-old actor is wearing a tuxedo with white shoes. Cyrus and

Hemsworth's representatives did not immediately respond to an email requesting comment. □

# Chicano author, illustrator collaborate on animal adventure

By MORGAN LEE  
Associated Press

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)** — The 81-year-old author is often called a dean of Chicano literature. The illustrator is a younger muralist steeped in the visual traditions of Mexican-American pop culture and low-rider cars.

Together, novelist Rudolfo Anaya and painter Moises Salcedo — who goes by El Moises — have created a bilingual children's book with parallel texts in Spanish and English about the adventures of a tiny owl named Ollie who longs to read on his own, even as he skips school and tangles with a cast of conniving animal characters in the hills and skies of northern New Mexico.

Anaya achieved lasting literary fame with the novel "Bless Me, Ultima" in 1972 about a boy's coming of age in post-World War II New Mexico under the guidance of a traditional spiritual healer. The book became a movie — and recently an opera.

The new children's book from the Museum of New Mexico Press— titled "Owl in a Straw Hat," or "El Tecolote del Sombrero de Paja" — is chocked full of references to northern New Mexico geography and homespun Hispanic tradition — from posole soup and pinon nuts to the "acequia" organizations that help irrigate fields and lend a special order to local rural life.

Anaya said the work is a heartfelt effort to encourage shared family reading in English or Spanish, with eye-grabbing imagery. The book's illustrations spring from the brush of Mexican-born, Arizona-raised El Moises — who made New Mexico his adopted home nearly a decade ago. His other recent commissions include urban murals, a tequila logo, CD covers and more.

The 45-year-old illustrator is a father of five who often paints at a weathered living-room table amid the bustle of family. El Moises says people call him a Chi-



In this Thursday, April 5, 2018 photo artist Moises Salcedo of Albuquerque shows an early rendition of the lead character for the bilingual children's book "Owl in a Straw Hat" at his home and studio in Albuquerque, N.M.

Associated Press

cano artist, but it's really just his take on everyday life.

"Bold and bright has always been my thing," he said. "I love low-riders because I grew up around them. ... I just think that I'm an artist who is narrating his life."

One of the new book's characters — a hungry and untrustworthy wolf in sunglasses named Luis Lobo — is adapted from a self-designed tattoo on the artist's upper arm. Other characters include a young raven and crow who prefer video games to school.

There are positive role models, too — a disciplined roadrunner who drives a dazzling low-rider car and a loving grandmother "Nana" owl.

El Moises and Anaya already are working on a sequel that explores concerns about childhood bullying — something the illustrator and a 13-year-old son have been grappling with recently in Albuquerque, culminating in the decision to do home schooling.

He said "Owl in a Straw Hat" is an outgrowth of his enduring concern for children — including children living far away in war-torn countries.

"Maybe that's why I write books for children, to get a lift, to think there is something positive on Earth

that might offset the evil that we see," Anaya said, on a day where violence in Syria dominated news headlines. "As I'm writing, I'm speaking to a child, to children. I'm kind of telling them, 'Look at Oli and Raven and Crow.' The children are always there, they're always there wanting to hear a story."

The English text of the new book contains a smattering of colloquial Spanish words and phrases — such as "mi'jito" for my little son. A Spanish-English glossary at the back of the book resolves any mysteries.

That aims to help young readers from various cultures feel comfortable, according to Enrique Lamadrid, who wrote the book's full Spanish translation. □

## Las Vegas to welcome 2019 with superstars, fireworks show



In this Dec. 31, 2015, file photo, people watch the fountains at the Bellagio while wearing paper hats to celebrate New Years Eve in Las Vegas.

By **REGINA GARCIA CANO**  
Associated Press

**LAS VEGAS (AP)** — No other city does New Year's Eve like Las Vegas.

Lady Gaga, Bruno Mars and Gwen Stefani are among the superstars who will be ushering in the new year with performances at venues on the Las Vegas Strip, while more than 300,000 people are expected to gather on the world-famous corridor Monday to watch eight minutes of fireworks.

At another celebration in the downtown Fremont Street entertainment district, 12 bands will play under a massive video canopy that will show the ball drop in New York's Time Square. "The only thing that can top Las Vegas is Las Vegas on New Year's Eve," said Jacqueline Peterson of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. "The city continues to evolve itself. We never run out of things to do."

Gaga's New Year's Eve concert at Park Theater at Park MGM casino-resort will be the third of her long-anticipated residency, which will debut Friday. Veteran Las Vegas performer Celine Dion will be at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, and Maroon 5 will celebrate the holiday once again at the Mandalay Bay Events Center.

Stefani will take the stage at Zappos Theater at Planet Hollywood casino-resort

Associated Press

as part of the residency she kicked off this year. Calvin Harris, The Chainsmokers and J. Cole are among those performing at nightclubs.

While Las Vegas is known as a place for last-minute trips, tourists who want to ring in 2019 here should act fast. Tourism officials expect 318,000 people to travel to Sin City for the holiday and nearly all the city's more than 147,000 hotel rooms to be booked.

"Now is the time to do it," Chris Baldizan, senior vice president of entertainment booking and development at MGM Resorts International, said about booking a trip for the holiday. But "we'll always find a spot for somebody."

New Year's Eve is worth an estimated \$403 million to Las Vegas, according to the convention and visitors authority, which is responsible for promoting the destination.

In addition to concerts with tickets on sale for the general public, casino operators also host over-the-top private parties for their VIP guests.

Caesars Entertainment hosted nine of those last year, which included DJs, dancers, fireworks shows, thousands of bottles of champagne and performances by Katy Perry, Jennifer Lopez and other stars. Five hangover brunches were served the next morning. □



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